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Problems of Communism

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New Phase in Moscow-Belgrade Relations

By RICHARD LOWENTHAL

AMONG all the moves made by the post-Stalin Soviet governments in their effort to achieve an international détente, none has aroused so much discussion in the Western world as the visit of a high-level Soviet delegation to Belgrade from May 27 to June 2 this year. The reason for the special attention paid to this development was the unique origin of the long-standing conflict between the Soviet bloc and Yugoslavia as a party quarrel among Communists. Until shortly before the Belgrade meeting, Moscow's moves toward a rapprochement with Yugoslavia—leading over a two-year period to the resumption of diplomatic relations, the settlement of frontier conflicts between Yugoslavia and her satellite neighbors, and to a slow revival of trade—could be viewed solely as part of the Communists' overall endeavor to relax international tension. However, the announcement that a Soviet delegation would go to Belgrade (somewhat like the mountain going to Mohammed) and that it would be headed by N. S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, coupled with Khrushchev's remarkable speech upon arrival, thrust the deeper issue of party relations into the limelight. This issue has dominated the Soviet-Yugoslav picture ever since.

There is no problem involved in understanding why the Malenkov and Bulganin governments should have regarded it as desirable, as part of their overall foreign policy, to end the state of military tension on the frontiers of Yugoslavia and the economic boycott of that country by the Soviet bloc, demonstrating in this critical case that no small neighbor of that bloc had any reason to fear the military might of the latter. Nor is there any difficulty in understanding why Yugoslavia should have welcomed these diplomatic overtures as a chance to reduce the pressure on her resources and to increase her freedom of economic and political maneuver in relation to both great power blocs. The more intriguing questions, on which this article will concentrate, are: (1) why Khrushchev should have chosen to combine the normalization of Soviet-Yugoslav diplomatic relations with a certificate that the Yugoslav heretics had remained a Marxist-Leninist party, and with an appeal to them to resume collaboration on a party basis; (2) what factors determined the reluctant and ambiguous Yugoslav response to that appeal; and (3) what are likely to be the repercussions of the discussion in Yugoslavia, in the Soviet satellite states and in the USSR itself.

Mr. Lowenthal is a noted political commentator and West European correspondent of the London *Observer*. He has written extensively on Yugoslavia and has visited there several times since the Moscow-Belgrade rift of 1948.

Dilemmas and Conflicts

THE Stalin-Tito conflict, just as the Stalin-Trotsky conflict at an earlier stage, has been the Communist expression of a dilemma familiar in Western history since the wars of religion: the need for sovereign national states to choose in their foreign policy between the demands of ideological solidarity and national interest. While in the West the decision has tended to go increasingly in favor of national interest, the Soviet leadership has had to face the issue in quite different conditions. Whether they regarded themselves as leaders of a revolution in control of a powerful empire, or as rulers of an empire armed with a revolutionary doctrine, they could as little abandon ideology as the state interest: their position was more similar to that of the Caliphate in its conquering period than to that of a secular Western state.

Stalin's solution of the dilemma—as brutally simple, and as unique as his solutions for all the con-

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tradictions of the state bequeathed by Lenin and his disciples—consisted in making the primacy of Soviet state interest an essential part of the ideology itself: that was the essence of the doctrine of "socialism in one country," elaborated in the formula of "the leading role of the Soviet Union" in the worldwide struggle of the proletariat. The advance of communism throughout the world was declared wholly dependent on the growth of the might of the Soviet Union. Aided by the fact that for 25 years the Communists spectacularly failed to repeat in any other country the Bolshevik victory of 1917, this was understood more and more clearly to mean that Communists could, and should, henceforth take power only under the protection of Soviet bayonets—that Communist revolution would no longer take place on the 1917 model, but only as a consequence of the expansion of Soviet power, as a *revolution from above*.

The victory of the Yugoslav Communist partisans under Tito, won in most of the country before the arrival of Soviet troops and with a revolutionary policy adopted and retained against Soviet advice, was the first serious blow to Stalin's "leading role" doctrine. Moreover, Tito's strategy had been influenced to a large extent by an alternative model, also originally developed against Soviet advice—that of the partisan armies of Mao Tse-tung.[1] It was inevitable that the Yugoslav Communists, having made their own revolution, should feel entitled to pursue their own policies as independent partners rather than as subordinates of the Soviet Communists. Not content with defending his national independence, however, Tito by 1948 was setting himself up as a rival of Moscow's authority by attempting to influence the "people's democracies" of Eastern Europe. That menace became obvious at the very moment when Mao, again disregarding Stalin's advice, was launching his final campaign to turn all China into a Communist empire.

In the Cominform resolution of June 1948 which expelled Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party, the essential charge was disloyalty to the Soviet Union, which to a Stalinist meant that Tito had broken with Marxism-Leninism. Other charges were put forward, some of them mere propagandist inventions and others reflecting genuine differences; but the whole world-Communist movement understood that the real issue was "nationalism"—the right for a national Communist party to seize and develop power in its own way—versus "internationalism," a synonym for the "leading role of the Soviet Union." This was confirmed when in all the satellite states the doctrine that each country might pursue its own road to socialism—at least *after* the conquest of power—was solemnly condemned and its former spokesmen purged as "Titoists." At the same time the Cominform (transferred from Belgrade to Bucharest) was reconverted into an instrument of centralized Soviet control.

Yet at the very moment when the doctrine of the "leading role of the Soviet Union" was reaffirmed amidst an orgy of arrests and executions, it became obviously untenable. Mao's victory in 1949, coupled with Tito's continuance in power despite Soviet bloc pressures, clearly belied the claim that the fate of communism everywhere depended wholly on the power of the Soviet Union. While Stalin was alive, his authority was sufficiently strong for him to continue to deny the obvious; when he died, his heirs were bound to make a new attempt to come to terms with the facts of Communist life.

Towards Titoism

THE first attempt to work out an alternative doctrine for the relations between independent Communist powers was made by Tito and the Yugoslav Communists between 1948 and 1950. Repudiating the concept of the "leading role of the Soviet Union," they called for fraternal solidarity between independent equals. Socialist states ruled by Communist parties should be natural allies and should learn from each other, but should deal with each other on a basis of equality; they should also be free to devise, in adaptation to local conditions, their own methods of advancing towards the common goal defined by Leninist theory.[2]

This "proto-Titoist" doctrine expressed in ideological form the Yugoslav leaders' desire to regain their place as autonomous members within a reformed Soviet bloc. Yet gradually, as Stalin and his satellites continued to denounce them and to purge their friends as "renegades," "traitors," "fascists" and "agents of imperialism," Tito and his team were forced to recognize that this avenue was barred and to seek international support outside the Communist fold while preserving their independence from both camps. In practice, this led to an opening of the country to contacts with the non-Communist world,

[1] The model is acknowledged by Svetozar Vukmanovic, in *Ueber die Volksrevolution in Griechenland* (On the People's Revolution in Greece), Belgrade, 1950, in a passage which blames the Greek Communist partisans for having failed to adopt the new strategy followed by Mao and Tito.

[2] See, *e. g.*, Milovan Djilas' pamphlet, *Lenin ueber die Beziehungen zwischen sozialistischen Staaten*, (Lenin on Relations between Socialist States), Belgrade, Yugoslaveska Kniga, 1950.

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as well as to a number of internal reforms which aimed at winning more popular support for the regime while preserving the principles of one-party control, nationalization of industry and economic planning. In theory, it led the Yugoslav Communists to assert that the Soviet Union's "un-socialist" urge to dominate alien peoples must be due to reactionary developments and features in Soviet society itself—particularly the growth of a new privileged bureaucratic caste—and that therefore the Soviet system could not be a model for Yugoslavia's socialist development.

There followed a transitional phase during which the Yugoslav leaders, in proselytizing sectarianism, seemed to claim that they had discovered the only true road to socialism. However, the impact of internal reform and broadening international experience finally led them to a breach with the fundamental Leninist dogma that Communist revolution and party dictatorship are the only means of overcoming the "contradictions of capitalism": thus they arrived at their present view that the path of social progress may differ *in principle* as well as in detail according to the history and the stage of economic development of a country, that "reformist" socialism may be as effective in one condition as Soviet-type communism in another, and that Yugoslavia's own solution is just one among many.

The Soviet Search for Solutions

YET while the Yugoslav Communists have thus long discarded their original thesis of the fraternal solidarity of all Communists against the non-Communist world, along with their desire to return to a reformed Soviet bloc, the Soviet Communist leaders have since Stalin's death moved steadily toward this "proto-Titoist" solution of their international dilemma. The original driving force in this process, we may presume, was not the need to readjust their relations with the "renegade" rulers of little Yugoslavia, but with their powerful Chinese allies.

Immediately after Stalin's death, the Soviet press began to stress the slogans of traditional, Leninist internationalism and to soft-pedal the "leading rule of the Soviet Union," while the specific late-Stalinist emphasis on the leadership of the Great Russian nation disappeared altogether. At the head of the Soviet missions both in China and in the East European satellite states, professional diplomats were replaced step by step by senior party officials, while the downgrading of the secret police and its subordination to party control inside the Soviet Union led to a withdrawal of a number of Soviet police representatives and agents from the satellites. It is probable, however, that the decisive stage in this search for an adjustment of inter-Communist relations was reached

The Soviet-Yugoslav Rift: Moscow's Two Faces

The Sins, Circa 1948:

The Information Bureau [Cominform] notes that recently the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia has pursued . . . a line which represents a departure from Marxism-Leninism. . . . Slanderous propaganda . . . borrowed from the arsenal of counterrevolutionary Trotskyism, is current within the Central Committee of the CPY. . . . [Its] leadership is revising the Marxist-Leninist teachings about the party. . . . There is no inner party democracy, no elections, and no criticism and self-criticism in the party. . . . The CPY [has been provided] with all the conditions necessary to correct speedily the mistakes committed. However, the leaders of the CPY, suffering from boundless ambition, arrogance and conceit, met this criticism with belligerence and hostility.

—*Cominform communique of June 28, 1948, published in* For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!, *Bucharest, July 1, 1948.*

Bogey Men and Retractions, Circa 1955:

We indubitably connect the events [of the last few years] with the provocatory role played in the relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR by the now unmasked enemies of the people—Beria, Abakumov, and others. We have studied thoroughly the material on which the grave accusations and insults of the leaders were based. Facts indicate that this material was fabricated by the enemies of the people, the despicable agents of imperialism who cheated their way into the ranks of our party.

—*N. Khrushchev, Yugoslav Home Service Radio, May 26, 1955.*

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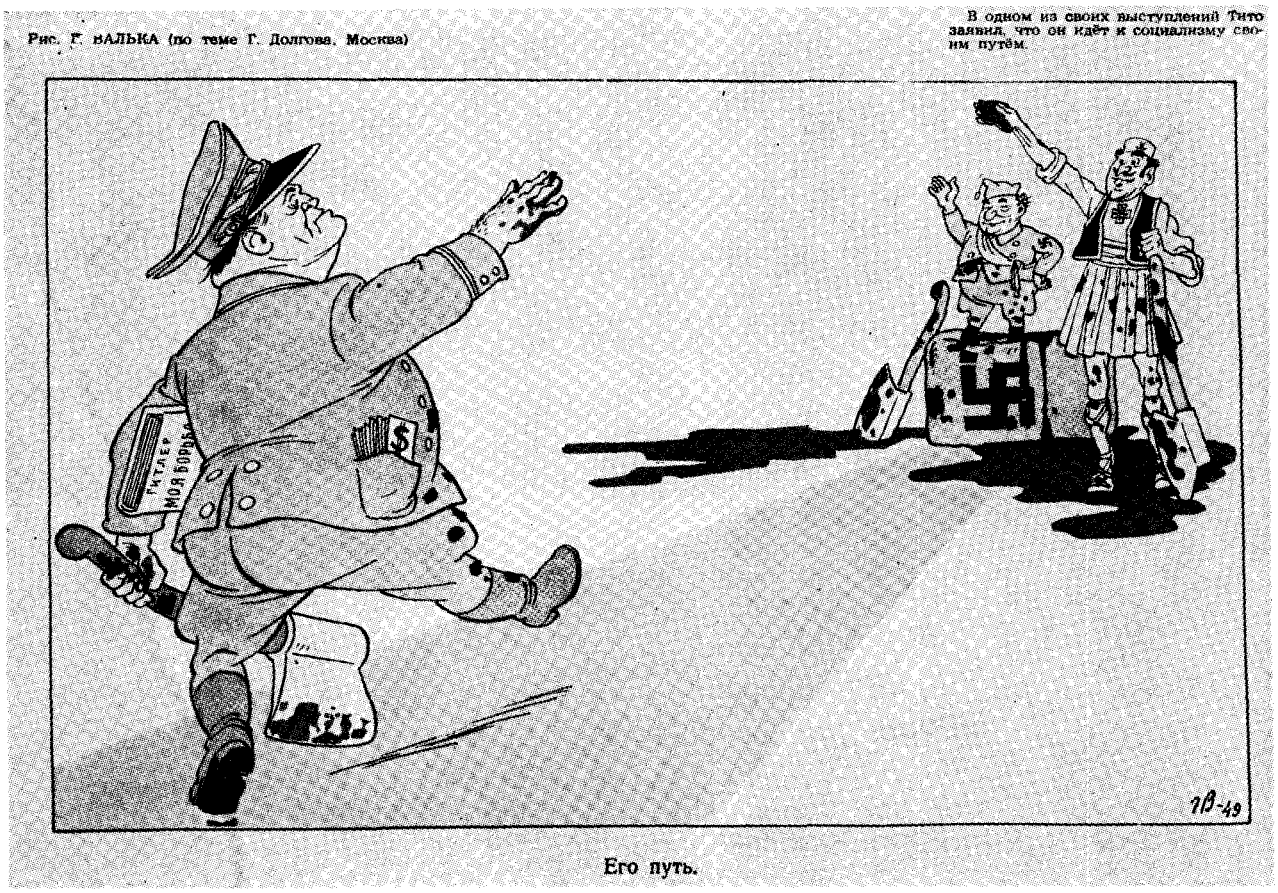
with the visit of a Soviet government delegation, headed by N. S. Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, to Peiping in October 1954. From that date onwards, the Soviet press began to speak of "the peace camp led by the Soviet Union *and* People's China."

To the outsider it is obvious that the doctrine of fraternal solidarity between independent and equal Communist governments, as first proclaimed by Tito in 1948 and now adopted by Khrushchev in 1954–55, offers no real solution to the dilemma to which this author initially referred—the choice between ideological solidarity and national interest. In any cooperation between sovereign states, solidarity will prevail so long as the divergent pull of interest is not too strong; it will break down if there is a serious conflict of national interest. The Stalinist solution worked so long as there were no independent Communist states; the Khrushchev solution will last only while compromises can be worked out without too much difficulty.

Toasts and Negotiations

THE attempt to apply the new Khrushchev formula—or outdated Tito formula—to relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia began in October 1954, directly after Khrushchev's return from Peiping. Up to then, the "normalization" of Soviet-Yugoslav relations had proceeded on strictly non-ideological lines, as part of the general diplomacy of détente between the Soviet bloc and all its enemies. It had led to an exchange of ambassadors, preliminary trade agreements, a near-cessation of frontier incidents, and to unexpected Soviet support for the Yugoslav-Italian settlement on Trieste concluded with Western mediation at the beginning of October; it had also caused Tito, after joining the Balkan alliance with Greece and Turkey and showing interest

MOSCOW'S VIEW ON TITO'S "PATH TO SOCIALISM": 1949



Caption, above right: In one of his speeches, Tito declared that he is following his own path to socialism.
Caption, below: His path.

—From *Krokodil* (Moscow), August 30, 1949

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in a possible European Defense Pact, to declare that he would have nothing to do with NATO because of its anti-Communist ideological character. But there had been no word yet from either side about a common ideological basis for the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

The first sign of such ideological courtship appeared on October 20 when *Pravda*, on the anniversary of the meeting of Soviet troops and Yugoslav partisans during the liberation of Belgrade, gave fulsome praise, for the first time in six years, to the independent wartime achievement of the partisans "under the leadership of Marshal Tito." On November 6, eve of the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, Maxim Saburov of the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party suggested, after recalling the common struggle of both countries, that their conflict had only benefited "their common enemies." The theme was further elaborated on November 28, the Yugoslav National Day, when Malenkov—then still Prime Minister—Molotov and Khrushchev appeared at the reception of the Yugoslav Embassy and demonstratively drank the health of "Comrade Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party." From that day, it was evident that the Soviet leaders were trying to win back the Yugoslav leaders for the Soviet bloc on the basis of Communist solidarity, by offering them the kind of independent position for which they had once asked and which, thanks to a very different relation of strength, China had in the meantime achieved.

Between the Soviet decision to try this approach and the announcement of the high-level talks in May lie several months of secret negotiations. From information gathered by the present writer in Belgrade in December 1954 and again during the Soviet visit, it appeared that the Soviet government first proposed that President Tito should come to Moscow, that they indicated from the start a wish to discuss the ideological differences between the respective Communist parties as well as the problems pending between the two governments, and that both proposals had already reached Belgrade last November when a secret Central Committee meeting was held before Tito's departure on his visit to India and Burma. On the principle of high-level talks, the Yugoslavs replied that it was up to the Soviets to come to Belgrade first, and that an apology for the insults and injuries inflicted on Yugoslavia since 1948 was a precondition; on the question of fraternal relations between the Communist parties, high Yugoslav party spokesmen stated after the November session of their Central Committee that owing to the different development of the Soviet and Yugoslav social system, they wished to retain full freedom of criticism and could only agree to coexist with the Soviet Union in the same way as with other states based on different social systems.

Evidence of a struggle in the Soviet "collective leadership" preceding the decision to come to Belgrade may be seen in the cautiously critical references to Yugoslavia in V. M. Molotov's speech of February 9, 1955, in President Tito's sharp rebuttal of March 7, and in the subsequent publication of the latter by *Pravda*. By the time the communique announcing the high-level meeting was published on May 14, the Soviet government must have accepted Tito's diplomatic terms, including the apology; but the announcement that N. S. Khrushchev would lead the Soviet delegation indicated that the Yugoslavs had not insisted on their desire completely to exclude discussion of party issues.

The Soviet approach to the discussion was outlined in *Pravda* on May 18. After reassuring the Yugoslavs that the new relationship with the Soviet Union "in no way implies . . . a deterioration of Yugoslavia's relations with other countries," it went on nevertheless to sketch out the basis for an ideological bloc:

Of course, it cannot be denied that there are substantial differences in the understanding of a number of important questions of social development. But the fact that public ownership of the basic means of production predominates in Yugoslavia; that the principal classes in Yugoslavia are the working class and the working peasantry who have militant revolutionary and patriotic traditions; that there is an age-old, profound community of ideas and culture between the peoples of the U. S. S. R. and Yugoslavia; that the working people of both countries have common vital interests . . . all this shows that there is a firm basis for wide and all-round cooperation between the Soviet and Yugoslav peoples.

The Yugoslav top leaders, however, were determined not to return to an ideological bloc themselves, but rather to use the Soviet overtures for increasing their freedom of maneuver *between* the blocs.[3] Tito underlined this orientation dramatically by travelling to India and Burma at the very moment when the decisive exchanges with the USSR were opening, as if he wished to indicate symbolically that his ambition was no longer to become a minor European Mao, but

[3] The contention, made in some quarters, that the 1954 campaign against M. Djilas—one of the former leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party who came out strongly against a one-party state and for parliamentary democracy—was actually inspired by groups within the Yugoslav Communist League aiming at a reconciliation with the USSR, has not been substantiated by any sources whatsoever. In fact, those who opposed Djilas were by no means sympathetic to Moscow. It is true, however, that Djilas's strictures against the principle of one-party rule convinced many of his opponents that it had been a mistake for Yugoslavia ever to depart from the Leninist dogma in international affairs, and were welcomed by the Soviet Embassy in Belgrade as a promising development.

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rather to become a European Nehru. Just before, Vice-President Edward Kardelj had visited a number of West European social democratic leaders, and had taken the occasion of a lecture in Oslo in October to develop systematically the view that social democracy and Communist revolution were equally good roads to social progress in different historical and economic conditions, and that any dogmatic exclusiveness was harmful for the cause of socialism. The full text of this lecture was published in *Borba*, the daily of the Yugoslav Communist League, on January 1, 1955, and republished later as a pamphlet.[4] Kardelj himself embarked on a speaking tour to educate his party in preparation for the forthcoming discussion with the Soviets: the cadres should understand that as there was progress in the West as well as in the East, in democratic forms as well as in Communist ones, there would be no merit, from a socialist point of view, in rejoining the Soviet bloc. That there was no merit in it from a national point of view, the people of Yugoslavia understood anyhow.

Khrushchev's Appeal and Borba's Barbs

FROM the moment of his arrival on Yugoslav soil, Khrushchev tried to force the pace; he must have been driven by an urgent desire to score a spectacular party success, as well as misled by a faulty estimate of the firmness of the position prepared by his hosts. In his very first words on arrival, he surprised them both by the extent of his apology and by the crudeness of his appeal for a resumption of party ties. It would have been sufficient from Tito's viewpoint if the Soviets had described the 1948 break as an inevitable parting of the ways, based on genuine differences of opinion, and had apologized for having needlessly embittered these differences by insulting accusations and attempts to apply economic and military pressure; that was indeed the line later taken by the Western Communist parties. But it was not what Khrushchev said: he bluntly attributed the entire guilt for the breach to "Beria, Abakumov," and explicitly confirmed that the Yugoslavs had remained a Marxist-Leninist party—suggesting that there had been no differences of principle at all.

On this fiction Khrushchev based his appeal for party relations, plainly addressed over Tito's head to a presumed pro-Soviet rank and file:

As representatives of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the party created by the great Lenin, we consider it desirable to have mutual confidence established between our parties. The strongest ties are created among the peoples of those countries where the leading forces are parties which base their activities on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. . . . We would not be doing our duty to our peoples and to the working people of the whole world if we did not do everything possible to establish mutual understanding between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav Communist League, on the basis of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.[5]

The first public reply was given two days later (May 28) in an editorial in *Borba*, which expressed approval for everything Khrushchev had said about the need to reduce international tension and to improve Soviet-Yugoslav "inter-state relations," but pointedly omitted both the strange apology and the appeal for party contacts, and concluded with a condemnation of "the partition of the world into ideological blocs," which was "not the path that leads to peace." Throughout the stay of the Soviet visitors, the Yugoslav press continued to elaborate on the danger of ideological blocs, and to underline the distinction between "coexistence in the sense of some temporary truce between hostile blocs, created by an ideological division"—*i.e.*, the Soviet concept—and the Yugoslav idea of "active coexistence," *i.e.*, "the active cooperation of all countries regardless of differences in their internal systems."[6] In the end, the Yugoslavs failed to get the Soviet delegation to subscribe to their view of ideological blocs, and had to content themselves with an ambiguous condemnation of "military blocs" in the joint declaration—ambiguous because, as the Yugoslavs well know, the coherence of the Soviet bloc does not depend on formal military alliances. But on the very day of the signing of the declaration the Yugoslav press once again repeated their own more far-reaching formula that all ideological blocs were a danger to peace:

It is apparent that the concept of the division of the world into two ideological blocs starts from the inevitability of the ultimate conflict between those two blocs. Therefore those who start from such a point of view do not accept the possibility of a full and permanent world peace, but only the possibility of postponing the ultimate conflict. . . . Those who consistently work for the preservation of world peace must approach this task with the deep conviction that peace can be preserved not only temporarily but permanently. They must be convinced that a world armed conflict, no matter when it comes, would present a general catastrophe of mankind. . . .[7]

What is attacked here is the basic Soviet doctrine of the "two camps" in world politics, and also Molotov's recent dictum that a third world war would not destroy mankind, only capitalism.

[4] An English translation of the lecture was published by the Yugoslav Embassy as a pamphlet in New Delhi, in 1955, under the title *Socialist Democracy in Yugoslav Practice*.

[5] *Pravda*, Moscow, May 27, 1955.

[6] *Borba*, Belgrade, May 28, 1955.

[7] *Ibid.*, June 2, 1955.

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Bulganin on Tito

1949:

Judas Tito and his helpers—these malevolent deserters from the camp of socialism to the camp of imperialism and fascism—have converted Yugoslavia into a Gestapo prison where every expression of free thought and human rights is put down, where the advanced representatives of the working class, the toiling peasantry and the intelligentsia are brutally annihilated.

—***Pravda,*** **September 10, 1949.**

1955:

From this platform we greet our Yugoslav friends and the President of Yugoslavia, Comrade Tito . . . and will continue to make great efforts in the future to follow the jointly chosen path of friendship . . .

—***Pravda,*** **August 6, 1955.**

Who Liberated Belgrade?

1948:

At a moment when the people's liberation movement in Yugoslavia was passing through a serious crisis, the Soviet army came to the aid of the Yugoslav people, crushed the German invader, liberated Belgrade . . .

–Letter from the Central Committee of the CPSU to CPY, May 4, 1948, reprinted in *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute,* Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1948, p. 51.

1955:

Our peoples will preserve forever in their memory that here near Belgrade Yugoslav-Soviet servicemen jointly dealt blows to the enemy and liberated this ancient Slav town from the Hitlerite occupiers.

—Khrushchev as reported by Yugoslav Home Service Radio, May 26, 1955

Khrushchev on the Longevity of Tito and Co.

1950:

The time will come when the peoples of Yugoslavia will make short shrift of Tito's clique, the despicable gang of traitors . . .

—***Pravda,*** **March 8, 1950.**

1955:

Comrade Khrushchev proclaimed wishes of long life to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, to Comrade Tito . . .

—***Pravda,*** **June 1, 1955.**

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On the question of Yugoslavia's diplomatic alignment, the Belgrade declaration thus marks a public reaffirmation of her "uncommitted" position—a barrier to closer military ties with the West, but a refusal also to accept one-sided political ties with the East. The same refusal is expressed in a more complicated, but no less decisive way in the compromise reached, apparently after long and hard discussion, on the question of party relations: on one side, "the two governments have agreed to . . . facilitate cooperation among the social organizations of the two countries through the establishing of contacts, the exchange of socialist experiences, and a free exchange of opinions;" on the other, they recognize that "questions of internal organization, of different social systems and of different forms of socialist development are solely the concern of individual countries." [8]

Together, this means that the barriers created in recent years both against Soviet influence in Yugoslavia and against Yugoslav influence in the satellite countries should fall; that mutual criticism will be limited by a kind of ideological nonagression pact, each side granting to the other that it may be socialist in its own way; that contacts between "social organizations," including Communist parties, will not be based on a common Leninist orthodoxy and will not exclude the continuation of similar or closer ties between the Yugoslav Communists and the Western and Asian social democrats, because the Yugoslavs interpret the right of each country to its own form of socialist development as covering not only their own and the Soviet case, but also the parliamentary democracies. It is on this point that Khrushchev's attempt to win back Yugoslavia on the basis of fraternal solidarity between independent Communist parties has most conspicuously failed.

The Perils of "Normalization"

THERE is one obvious objection to the above interpretation of the Belgrade meeting: If the Yugoslav leaders are really determined not to return to the Soviet bloc—not even on terms of relative independence and greatly increased prestige—why did they agree to receive the Khrushchev delegation at all? Why were they not content with the fruits of slow and steady normalization, instead of taking the risk of stirring up a difficult discussion in their own party, or rousing the distrust of their people, whose great majority has become profoundly anti-Soviet, and of being misunderstood in the West? They must have known for what stakes Khrushchev was playing; they must have known that once they invited him, they could hardly avoid signing a compromise formula which would be at least ambiguous.

There are three answers to this question. The first is that there were risks in refusing such a high-level contact as well. The Yugoslav leaders were well aware of the determination of the Kremlin to pursue its diplomacy of détente, and of the changing international atmosphere. They could not afford a situation in which they could be presented to other countries as an obstacle to peace.

Second, the Yugoslavs were in grave international payments difficulties, but they had huge outstanding demands against the Soviet Union and the satellites dating from the damage done to them by breaking of delivery contracts in 1948–49. A Soviet apology for former boycott measures would amount to recognition of the basis for those claims, and the high-level meeting desired by the Soviets was the one way to obtain that admission. Since then, the Soviets have in fact agreed to pay very considerable damages and to grant new credits; the pressure for similar concessions from Yugoslavia's satellite neighbors is still going on.

Third and last, just as Khrushchev seems to have believed he could draw the Yugoslav leaders closer to the USSR than they themselves wanted to come, so the Yugoslav leaders believe that the breaking down of barriers may start a process beyond the control of the present leaders in the satellite countries, and may even accelerate the process of change inside the Soviet Union. Under cover of the ideological non-aggression pact both sides are thus conducting an ideological tug-of-war for highly ambitious aims.

The Soviet argument in this tug-of-war (exemplified by editorials in *Pravda* of July 16, 1955, and *Kommunist*, No. 11, 1955), stresses Soviet willingness to recognize "separate paths to socialism," but proceeds to argue that Yugoslavia can only resist imperialist pressure for the restoration of capitalism if she adjusts her policies so as to strengthen ties with the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies;" it urges that further steps should now be taken towards "the establishment of contact . . . between the CPSU and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism." [9] It thus admits that the purpose of Khrushchev's Belgrade visit was not fully achieved at the time, but claims that the foundations have been laid.

[8] *Ibid.*, June 3, 1955; *Izvestia*, Moscow, same date.

[9] *Pravda*, July 16, 1955.

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The Yugoslav reply has been put forward on the theoretical level in an article by Veljko Vlahovic, of the Yugoslav Communist Central Committee, on "The forms of Cooperation between Socialist Forces,"[10] and on the level of practical politics in a speech by Tito at Karlovac on July 27.[11] The Vlahovic article was at first misinterpreted in the West, on the basis of incomplete reports, as a direct appeal for the creation of a new International comprising both Communists and democratic socialists, and even as the prelude for a vast new international "popular front" maneuver to be launched by Belgrade on Moscow's behalf. The full text shows, however, that the vision of an all-inclusive International only appears as a vague long-term perspective, that "popular front" methods are explicitly criticized as a dishonest and therefore in the long run ineffective road to unity, and that the real purpose of the article is to marshal Yugoslav objections to the Soviet idea of "a rapprochement on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles"—*i.e.*, to a one-sided ideological alignment with the Soviet bloc.

These objections are three: first, that Marxist-Leninist doctrine does not take adequate account of developments in recent decades, such as the liberation of former colonial countries, the emergence of progressive forms of state capitalism *etc.*, and that any doctrinaire alignment would therefore be an obstacle to an open-minded analysis of these developments; second, that progress towards socialism is not confined to movements following a Leninist revolutionary strategy or to any one bloc of states; third, that the interests of labor therefore require the cooperation of movements following different strategies in different countries on a basis of mutual tolerance, on the model of the First rather than the Third International, and that such broad cooperation is incompatible with the attempts of the representatives of any one doctrine to exercise a "hegemony."

Quo Vadis?

THE Vlahovic article's main purpose is to attack the doctrinal authority of Moscow and the organizational authority of the Cominform. In part that attack serves the defensive purpose of preserving the special position of the Yugoslav Communists in their friendly but independent contact with both Soviet Communists and Western social democrats. But in part, it also aims offensively to loosen the Soviet hold over the East European satellites, inasmuch as that hold is exercised through party ties and based on doctrinal arguments. If one of the basic differences in the interpretation of the Belgrade declaration is that Moscow concedes the right to a "different road to socialism" only to independent Communists, while Belgrade admits it also for "reformists," the other main difference is that Khrushchev would grant even such limited independence only to those who have already effectively taken it, like China and Yugoslavia, while Tito now demands it for the satellites.

This latter point was strongly underlined in Tito's Karlovac speech in which he attacked "certain leaders in neighboring countries." His attack clearly had a dual political objective: (1) To discredit the leaders who had conducted the former anti-Titoist campaign by forcing an open revision of the show trials of the period; and (2) to induce the satellite states to develop a new relationship with Yugoslavia directly and not merely as a kind of appendix to the new relationship begun by the Soviet Union. Strategically, both demands are aimed at ending the satellite status of the Communist states of East and Southeast Europe; this is also the purpose of his demand for a dissolution of the Cominform.

There is evidence that the Yugoslav leaders regard such a "Titoist" development as feasible and even probable in some of the satellites; for example, they have called attention not only to the release of a number of former "national Communists" in the past year, but to such phenomena as the successful refusal of the Hungarian Communist ex-Premier Imre Nagy to recant after he had been deposed, and to the continued popularity of figures like Nagy, or Gomulka in Poland, inside their Communist parties. However, there is just as much evidence that the present Soviet leaders are not ready to grant such independence to their satellites; for one thing, preparations for the coordination of the new Five-Year plans which start throughout the Soviet bloc with the beginning of 1956 show clearly that the Soviet leaders now count on a detailed division of labor within their empire on a scale which seems incompatible with any degree of satellite autonomy.[12]

Tito's trumpet calls have produced a great deal of inner-party discussion; and since the application of police measures inside the satellite CP's is shunned for the moment, such discussion is difficult for Moscow's controllers to stifle. It thus looks as if

[10] Veljko Vlahovic, "O formama saradnje socialistickih snaga," *Kommunist*, No. 6/7, Belgrade, July 1955.

[11] *Borba*, July 28, 1955.

[12] M. Constantinescu, "On the Road to Building Socialism," in *For A Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!*, Bucharest, September 9, 1955.

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Khrushchev's experiment has not only failed to induce Belgrade to accept the kind of fraternal Communist ties offered to it, but as if the mere attempt has reproduced in a new form the old struggle between the USSR and Yugoslavia for the East European "sphere of influence," which was one of the main factors of the original breach.

Thus Khrushchev's attempt to create "brotherly" relations between Communist states in a belated application of Lenin's original doctrine may prove to be only one phase in the breakdown of the forcible synthesis imposed by Stalin on the contradictions of his empire, and his failure in the Yugoslav case may well become as powerful an argument in the internal struggle among Stalin's heirs as was his initial success in the case of China.

Report on the Agricultural Front

By LAZAR VOLIN

IT is highly significant to note that at almost every crucial juncture of Russian history over the past 100 years, problems related to agriculture and the peasantry have emerged as a dominant issue to plague the regime in power. The peasant question was central in the period following the Crimean fiasco of 1854–55, when abolition of serfdom preoccupied the country, in the Russian revolutions of 1905–06 and 1917, in the initiation of Lenin's New Economic Policy in 1921, and at the start of the Five-Year Plan era and collectivization in 1929. Similarly, in the present critical phase of post-Stalin adjustment, the problem has re-emerged as a pivotal issue on the Soviet domestic scene. Since August 1953 agriculture has been the object of an avalanche of government decrees, official speeches, newspaper editorials and news reports, revealing a situation of serious proportions in this important sector of the Soviet economy.

The crux of the present problem, as the Soviet leadership itself has admitted, is the inadequate production of collectivized agriculture, which adversely affects both the standard of living of the population and Soviet export trade. The problem is not a new one; it reflects chronic weaknesses in Soviet agriculture that have been apparent since its collectivization, weaknesses aggravated by the last war and by mother nature in the form of frequent droughts.

What is new in the present situation, however, is the extent to which the regime, specifically Messrs. Malenkov and Khrushchev, have admitted—implicitly or explicitly—the scope of present difficulties. In this connection, one of the most startling developments in the post-Stalin period was Malenkov's humiliating resignation, partly prompted, according to his own statement, by his personal responsibility "for the unsatisfactory state of affairs in agriculture."[1] The statement had to be taken with a grain of salt: if Malenkov, as he indicated, had been responsible over a number of years for the top-level direction of agriculture, that responsibility certainly was well concealed. Ironically, Khrushchev—who now, in the prevailing view, has managed to make himself the Number-1 man in the Soviet leadership—publicly was much more closely identified with agricultural matters, even under Stalin, than Malenkov.[2]

Neither Khrushchev nor Malenkov in their several pronouncements before the latter's downfall spoke of

Mr. Volin, a frequent contributor to this magazine, is one of the foremost American experts on Soviet agriculture and author of *A Survey of Soviet Russian Agriculture* (Washington, 1951), considered a standard work in the field. The present article is abridged and adapted from a longer survey to be published in the December issue of *The American Slavic and East European Review*. The permission of its editors to print this adaptation is gratefully acknowledged.

[1] Published in *Pravda*, Moscow, February 9, 1955.

[2] Until 1948 A. A. Andreev was the member of the Politburo publicly identified as the party boss of Soviet agriculture. As early as 1946 Khrushchev was appointed to the top-level Council for Kolkhoz Affairs and its Presidium, and later was generally assumed to be Andreev's successor. In 1950 he was moved from the Ukraine to Moscow and began to direct the crucial Stalinist campaign for the merger of the collectives into larger units, a drive which reduced the number of collectives from over 250,000 to 89,000. In one phase of this campaign—the proposed resettlement of the peasants in the so-called *agrogorods* (enlarged villages)—Khrushchev was overruled. It is possible that Malenkov, then Secretary of the Central Committee, may have opposed Khrushchev on this point, but it is equally possible that Stalin intervened on his own initiative. Khrushchev, by the way, has made no attempt so far to revive the *agrogorod* issue.

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an agricultural "crisis" as such; in fact, in established Soviet fashion, they even boasted of certain successes on the agricultural front.[3] Nevertheless their statements, coupled with the numerous actions taken, revealed a deep disturbance on the part of the regime over the slow progress of agriculture since World War II. It is significant that, with few exceptions, what boasting was done was confined to claims of a rise in commercial (*tovarnaya*) production of farm products—*i. e.*, substantially that portion of the total agricultural output which the regime acquires at a low price from the collective farms. Since the ruthless Soviet system of compulsory deliveries to the state determines quotas on the basis of units of land rather than on actual output, commercial crop production is not indicative *per se* of the gross outturn of crops and animal products. Malenkov's and Khrushchev's silence on the latter, notably on grain production figures, was not only a measure of the current situation in agriculture; it was also a repudiation of the huge gross production figures released by the Stalinist regime in the past, figures determined in advance of the harvest on the basis of so-called "biological" crop-estimating methods, which took no account of the large harvesting losses common in the USSR.[4] In fact, Malenkov explicitly and severely criticized these methods in his August 1953 speech.

Nevertheless Khrushchev must have relied on past biological crop estimates when, in his speech of September 1953, he complained that total agricultural production had increased only 10 percent between 1940 and 1952. The unreliability of the crop estimates, coupled with the admitted unsatisfactory condition of the livestock industry, casts doubt even upon this low figure (which Khrushchev ruefully compared to the regime's claim of more than doubling industrial output). Even if the 10 percent figure were accurate, the increase was offset to some extent by the upward trend of population growth, which the Bolsheviks, with their Marxist disdain for "parson" Malthus, have been trying to encourage. Moreover, the rapid growth of the urban population, as a result of continuous industrialization, has accentuated the food supply problem, since the city folk could not be expected to forage for themselves as the peasants have been forced to do under Soviet conditions.

The weakest link in Soviet agriculture, by Khrushchev's own showing, has been the livestock industry. This weakness has prevailed since the beginning of collectivization, except for a few years in the middle 1930's when private livestock breeding by the *kolkhozniki* (members of collective farms) was encouraged by the Soviet government. With the exception of hogs, livestock numbers at the beginning of 1953 were lower than before collectivization in 1928, according to figures given by Khrushchev in his September 1953 report. The number of cows, for instance, was 3.5 million head, or 13 percent below the number at the beginning of 1941, and 8.9 million head or 27 percent below the number at the beginning of 1928.

Even more important was the low productivity of animals: yields of milk, meat, and wool were low, considerably behind the planned goals. In such old commercial dairy farming regions as the Kirov, Vologda, and Kostroma *oblasts*, milk yields per cow in the communal herds of collective farms were between 1,600 and 2,000 pounds in 1952 and yields were half as large in some of the Caucasian and Central Asiatic republics. By way of comparison, the average yield of milk per milk cow in the United States in 1952 was over 5,300 pounds and in a number of states exceeded 6,000 pounds. Khrushchev also revealed that butter production in Siberia, an old pre-World War I export region, was smaller in 1952 than in 1913. This revelation goes far to explain the shortage of butter, which has become something of a luxury in Soviet Russia and is imported rather than exported, as it was formerly.

Obviously, then, the diet of the rapidly growing population of Soviet Russia cannot be improved nor the predominance of starches diminished without a sharp upswing in livestock production. Such an increase presupposes, among other things, a bolstering

[3] The following is a list of the more important official pronouncements dealing with Soviet agriculture during the past three years. Hereafter they will be referred to by date alone. Malenkov's speech at a meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, August 9, 1953); Khrushchev's report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party on September 3, 1953, "Concerning Measures for the Further Development of Agriculture of the USSR" (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, September 15, 1953); Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of September 7, 1953, with reference to the above report of Khrushchev (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, September 13, 1953); Report of Khrushchev to the Central Committee of the Communist Party on February 23, 1954, "Concerning the Further Increase of Grain Production and the Utilization of Virgin and Unplowed Land" (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, March 21, 1954); Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of March 2, 1954, with reference to the above report of Khrushchev (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, March 6, 1954); Report of Khrushchev to the Central Committee of the Communist Party on January 25, 1955, "Concerning the Increased Production of Animal Products" (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, February 3, 1955); Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of January 31, 1955, with reference to the above report of Khrushchev (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, February 2, 1955).

[4] For a more detailed discussion see Naum Jasny, *The Socialized Agriculture of the USSR*, Stanford University Press, Calif., 1949, pp. 541 and 728; see also this author's article, "Agricultural Statistics in Soviet Russia: Their Usability and Reliability," *The American Statistician*, Vol. 7, No. 3, June–July 1953, pp. 8–12.

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of the forage supply. The inadequacy of the hay harvest has been stressed monotonously year in and year out in Soviet publications. Khrushchev underscored the problem by pointing out (again in his September 1953 pronouncement) that the amount of hay available per head of cattle in the *kolkhozes* decreased by 13 percent between 1940 and 1952.[5] A considerable increase in acreage under sown grasses during that period offered little relief because of the low yields of such grasses, especially in the drier regions, and because they replaced in part the more valuable feed grains, such as oats and barley. It is no wonder that Khrushchev complained of a very low use of grain and other concentrates in feeding animals, with a consequent unfavorable effect on their productivity.

In various other food and fiber crops, such as potatoes, vegetables, oil seeds and flax, the supply was again inadequate for national needs because of low yields per acre and declining acreages. Thus flax fiber acreage, which in 1950 was only 10 percent below prewar (1940), was drastically reduced to 42 percent below the prewar acreage by 1953. Potato acreage, which was 11 percent above prewar in 1950, declined to 8 percent above prewar by 1953. Unlike the United States, which has had a perennial farm surplus problem, Soviet Russia under a system of agrarian collectivism has been bedeviled by scarcities.

It is obvious that expansion of agricultural production has become essential. While this basic fact of Soviet life was also stressed during the Stalin era, there was never the overtone of urgency that has been imparted by the Malenkov-Khrushchev program. For Stalin, sitting firmly in the saddle, could afford to assume a tough attitude toward the peasant and to use Fabian tactics in delaying a substantial improvement in the living standard of the population in general. The peasant, he felt, could be squeezed a little more to increase "commercial" production. Certainly, the screw was turned tighter on the collectivized peasantry during the last years of Stalin's reign through the campaign of merging collectives, directed by none other than Khrushchev himself.[6] And Stalin's last testament, "The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR," held the menacing promise of a further crack-down on the peasantry by proposing that the collectives be barred from all private trade.

The heirs of Stalin were not in the same position, particularly at the beginning of the new regime; they had to make some propitiating gestures both to the peasant and to the consumer.[7]

The Search for a Solution

WHAT, then, are the methods which Stalin's successors have adopted in their efforts to achieve the vitally necessary expansion of agriculture? It is possible to distinguish three stages in post-Stalin agrarian policy: the first, running from August 1953 to the end of the year, when cooperation between Malenkov and Khrushchev appears to have been close; the second, embracing the calendar year 1954, which shows more distinctly the impact of Khrushchev's leadership in agriculture; and the third, beginning with the fall of Malenkov early in 1955, when Khrushchev assumed full control of agricultural policy and administration. At the outset it should be noted that through all three stages, the basic structure of collective farming has remained essentially unaltered.[8] That the collective farm system of state-regimented and directed crop-sharing is repugnant to the peasants and may be *per se* an obstacle to increased productivity, has, of course, never been admitted by the Soviet leadership. "Reform" measures have been confined to concessions and adjustments within the collective system.

As a matter of fact, at the very start of the so-called "new course," party control over collective farming was further tightened and the role of the state machine-tractor stations (MTS) in the management of collective agriculture was strengthened in various ways. One important method was the transfer of the hitherto seasonally employed labor force of *kolkhozniki* to the

[5] There was also a 50 percent decrease during the same period in the amount of potatoes and a reduction in concentrates fed to collective livestock, as well as a sharp decrease in the amount of roughage distributed to the *kolkhozniki* (M. Lutsenko, Kommunist, No. 15, 1953, p. 30).

[6] See footnote 2. See also this author's article, "The Turn of the Screw in Soviet Agriculture," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1952, pp. 277–288.

[7] While this paper deals solely with the agricultural measures initiated, it is worth noting that in the initial Malenkov period, the stress laid upon agricultural expansion was correlated with the reorientation of industrial policy—*i.e.*, the greater emphasis on the development of light industry and consumer goods. For a detailed discussion see the author's article, "The Malenkov-Khrushchev New Economic Policy," *The Journal of Political Economy* (Chicago, Illinois), June 1954, reprinted in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (September-October 1954).

[8] In June 1955 Khrushchev in a speech at Riga indicated for the first time some retreat from the super-collectivism which resulted from the 1950 merger campaign (see footnote 2). So far, however, there have been no indications that this retreat will result in any significant unscrambling of the merged collectives. Otherwise, all agricultural measures adopted by the regime have been within the framework of collective and state farming as it was developed during the Stalin era.

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permanent staff of the MTS.[9] These workers, however, still retain their own small private plots (or "kitchen gardens") and their membership in the *kolkhozes*, which partly compensate them for their work. Thus, the old dualism in collective farm management has remained, with responsibility divided between the *kolkhoz* proper and the MTS servicing it with power and machinery. The result is inevitably friction and loss of efficiency.

A number of reforms of the Malenkov period encouraged "acre and a cow" farming (*i.e.*, the personal farming of the *kolkhozniki* on their own small plots), underscoring another dichotomy in collective agriculture—the contradiction between the "dwarfism" and the "gigantism" in the Soviet farm system, the dwarf peasant holding competing with the gigantic collective farm for the labor and loyalty of the *kolkhozniki*. The new concession to dwarfism stemmed from a renewed emphasis on economic incentives to the collective farmers, including the reduction and stabilization of compulsory delivery quotas, a substantial increase in state prices for produce, reduced and simplified agricultural taxes, and encouragement of *kolkhoz* free market trade—all proclaimed by Malenkov in his speech of August 8, 1953, and by Khrushchev a month later.

The use of economic incentives in Soviet agriculture is not a new device. Soviet agricultural policy has always consisted of a combination of coercion, indoctrination, and incentives. The latter, however, played a minor role during the postwar Stalin era. The new stress that they received in the 1953 Malenkov program led to some comparison with the NEP period of the 1920's. Actually, a more correct comparison would be with the middle 1930's, when Stalin ordered some relaxation of his radical collectivization program, in particular granting the *kolkhozniki* the right to farm their own small plots and to own a few head of livestock. In the latter connection, it is important to note that collective gigantism met its greatest failure, and correspondingly peasant small farming manifested its greatest success, in animal husbandry.

Another feature of the original Malenkov program was an increase of investments in agriculture for machinery, buildings, and especially commercial fertilizer. The government's capital investments in agriculture were scheduled to increase from 12.3 billion rubles in 1953 to 21 billion in 1954, or 71 percent.[10] Total government outlays for agriculture, which include investment and current expenditure, were to increase during the same period from 52.3 billion rubles to 74.4 billion, or 42 percent. The 1954 budget appropriation for machine-tractor stations amounted to 30.8 billion rubles, compared with 20.6 billion in 1953. It is not known whether these figures are fully comparable from year to year because of possible price changes, modified accounting methods, *etc.* Nor is it known to what extent the 1954 goals were actually reached. But an upward trend of capital expenditures in agriculture cannot be gainsaid.[11]

Though the large targets announced in 1953 for manufacture of commercial fertilizer seem unrealistic, the idea itself of increased fertilization as a means of raising crop yields is sound. It applies particularly to the large area of poor podzolic soils in northern and north-central Russia, which needs and can use more fertilizer since it does not suffer from moisture deficiency and frequent droughts, as does much of the more fertile black soil area of the country. The decreased supply of manure since the war, owing to smaller livestock numbers and wasteful utilization practices, accentuates the need for commercial fertilizer. Fertilizer shortage may have accounted in part for smaller crop acreage in the non-black-soil area in 1953 than in 1940.[12]

The Malenkov program put stress on the expansion of the livestock industry, the forage supply, and such crops as potatoes and vegetables. Little attention was paid to grain, the basic crop of the Soviet Union; apparently the regime still took the attitude expressed by Malenkov at the Nineteenth Communist Party Congress in October 1952, when he said, "The grain, problem, which was formerly considered the most

[9] The machine-tractor stations inherited the duties of the abolished *raion* agricultural departments (*raizo*) and also many of the specialists and technicians attached to the former. According to *Selskoe Khoziaistvo* (Agriculture) of August 31, 1955, most of these specialists are now to be transferred to the collective farms, supplementing the 113,000 specialists already there. The transferred specialists are to be paid mainly by the collective farms, but the state is to supplement their salaries for three years on a gradually diminishing scale. The official motives for this decision were to increase the interest of the specialist in collective farm production and to utilize their services more effectively as "organizers and technical leaders," rather than in the more "passive role of advisors to the chairman (manager) and the boards of directors of the collective farms."

[10] In addition to state investment in agriculture, the *kolkhozes* make capital investments of their own in labor and cash. Money investments were to increase to 18 billion rubles in 1955, compared with 10.9 billion in 1952 and 12.5 billion in 1953. The increase in *kolkhoz* investments has, of course, a deflationary effect on the income of *kolkhozniki*.

[11] All figures in the paragraph are from a budget report by Minister of Finance A. G. Zverev, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, April 22, 1954.

[12] See V. Kudrin, *Planovoe Khoziaistvo* (Planned Economy), Moscow, No. 3, 1954, p. 45.

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Main Caption: At Odds With Nature.
Lower Caption: The harvest is already here, but our projects haven't ripened yet.
Caption to right: The building of granaries and elevators in some regions is not proceeding satisfactorily.
Caption in background: Harvest.
Titles on papers: Granary Project, Elevator Project.

—From *Krokodil*, Moscow, July 10, 1955.

acute and serious problem, is successfully solved, is solved definitely and irrevocably."

In general, the 1953 program appeared to be more realistic than the Stalin policy, which relied on a number of fads for a spectacular "pie in the sky" increase of crop yields per acre, such as called for in the 1951–55 plan to expand grain production by 40 to 50 percent (with a 55 to 65 percent expansion in wheat alone, all but 10 percent to come from improved yields). Such goals, it was hoped, would be achieved through the magic of the Michurin-Lysenko pseudo-science, the Williams' crop rotation system, with its universal, indiscriminate use of perennial grasses, the gigantic tree shelter-belt program, and huge irrigation projects, all of which were combined in the "great Stalin plan of reconstruction of nature." These schemes were conspicuous by their absence in the official speeches and government decrees dealing with agriculture in the fall of 1953; it later became evident that they had been deflated considerably.

Stage II: The Quest for Grain

IN the winter of 1953–54, only a few months after the original program was announced, Soviet agricultural policy shifted its emphasis. The grain problem, which had been so "successfully solved" suddenly began to occupy the center of the stage again. A new project envisioning a huge expansion of grain, particularly wheat, on virgin or long uncultivated land in the semi-arid regions (principally beyond the Urals) was announced in a lengthy report by Khrushchev to the Central Committee on February 25, 1954, and in several decrees which were published in March 1954.[13] This project originally called for not less than 32 million new acres in grain by 1955, representing an increase of the Russian grain acreage by 12 percent in two years. The production goal was 18 to 20 million metric tons of additional grains, about three-fourths of the harvest to be marketable. In August 1954 the target was stepped up from 32 million acres to 37 million acres. This enormous goal was again practically doubled for 1956 to about 69–74 million acres, equal to more than one-fourth of the total grain area in the USSR in 1953.

The new program of grain expansion is in effect a return to Stalinist policy of the early 1930's, when the regime first attempted to expand acreage and to organize so-called "grain factories", or huge mechanized state farms, largely in the same regions beyond the Volga and the Urals in which the present project is undertaken. While *kolkhozes* were to be responsible for most of the 1954 and 1955 targets, the largest increase in the grain area, scheduled for 1956, is to be accomplished through the organization of new state farms, or *sovkhozes*. By the end of 1954, 124 new *sovkhozes* already were set up in the eastern regions, and 300 more were established in the spring of 1955. A strenuous recruiting campaign for "volunteers" to work the new land has been conducted among Soviet youths.

The earlier Stalinist project to expand grain acreage in the eastern regions was beset by many pitfalls and failures later acknowledged by the Soviet government and its spokesmen. Apparently the Kremlin is willing, on Khrushchev's initiative, to repeat the experiment, although the principal reasons for the difficulties and failures of the 1930's in these regions still exist. Most of the new crop acreage represents marginal or submarginal land, particularly from the standpoint of climatic conditions. Severe winters

[13] See footnote 3. For a more detailed discussion see, "A New Battle for Grain in Soviet Russia," *Foreign Agriculture*, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Vol. 18, No. 11, November 1954, pp. 194–199.

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largely preclude the growing of higher-yielding winter crops. The short growing season and particularly the limited moisture supply, coupled with high temperatures during the critical period of crop growth, frequent devastating droughts (often accompanied by scorching winds from the desert and soil-blowing), and inclement weather during the harvest period, make most of the area one of precarious agriculture, of low and uncertain crop yields. This, no doubt, is well-known to Khrushchev and Co., who presumably rely on the multiplier of the huge acreage. For even with a net yield (exclusive of seed) of 4 to 5 bushels, instead of the planned goal of 15 bushels (10 centners of gross yield), large quantities of grain could be obtained from an area of 30–40 million or more acres.

Khrushchev has not been deterred by the considerations that with such light yields the grain may be very costly, that with the use of the same resources for more intensive farming in the older regions even greater returns might be obtained. He doubtless pins hope on mechanization, on the tractor and the combine, to economize greatly on the additional manpower required and thus to minimize the calamity of a crop failure in a sparsely settled territory. A very considerable diversion of material resources, tractors, machinery, *etc.*, to the new regions was indicated.

One can only speculate on the causes of this puzzling about-face of the Kremlin with respect to grain. Was it the poor harvest of 1953? Was it possibly a sudden awakening of the Soviet leadership from the self-intoxication of the deceptive biological-yield figures? Was it disillusionment with methods only a short while before considered so appropriate for spectacularly increasing yields per acre? Or were there, perhaps, strategic considerations involved concerning the development of a geographically less vulnerable source of food supply? [14] (The transfer of units of demobilized soldiers to the new lands, and the assumption of patronage over farms in those areas by certain army divisions, lend some credibility to the last-cited hypothesis.) All these and perhaps other factors may have played a part in the decision.

Whatever the causes, Khrushchev could at the outset feel himself vindicated. Weather conditions in many of these eastern regions were exceptionally favorable in the summer of 1954. Although less than nine million new acres were seeded and harvesting losses were admittedly high, it was officially claimed that a large enough crop was gathered in the east (from both the old and new acreages) to top the 1953 total output and also the government's grain acquisition, despite a repeated poor crop in the Ukraine and other southern regions.[15] This was Khrushchev's triumph. Bulganin in his speech of November 7, 1954, went out of his way to assert that the (alleged) results of the first year "confirmed in practice the correctness and realism of the decisions of the party regarding the cultivation of new lands." [16] It remains to be seen whether this attitude will survive a dry year or two, such as the present 1955 season in which the eastern regions have faced droughts of critical proportions.

The seeding of a huge area of about 40 million acres of new land took place in the spring of 1955. Except for a few million acres plowed in the spring, the soil was prepared for seeding by plowing during the preceding summer. In the hasty carrying out of this enormous task, many shortcomings and inefficiencies were reported. Living conditions for the new farm workers were especially harsh. Serious lags in housing and other construction work on the new state farms were severely censured in the Soviet press. These and other difficulties perhaps can be overcome in time; weather, however, is another matter, and an eventual cutback in the program because of climatic difficulties cannot be ruled out.

To round out the discussion of the 1954 grain program, it is important to note that in June 1954, the policy of increased economic incentives was finally applied to grain farmers. Compulsory delivery quotas were reduced for the collectives and entirely abandoned for the peasants' small plots. Prices were raised on the grain to be acquired by the government, especially on that in excess of quotas.[17] Thus the differential treatment which had separated grain from other major agricultural products since the fall of 1953 was abandoned.

The decision to extend incentives to grain-producers was embodied in a lengthy decision of the Central Committee which dealt with a number of other subjects also relating to agriculture.[18] It may or may not be significant that this document was the first

[14] It may be recalled in this connection that on the eve of the war, in April 1940, there was adopted a three-year program of grain-acreage expansion in the eastern regions, which called for an addition of less than 11 million acres of tillable land (not to seeded acreage).

[15] *Selskoe Khoziaistvo*, November 10, 1954.

[16] *Pravda*, November 8, 1954.

[17] It should be noted that the Soviet government obtains most of the grain from the collective farms through payments in kind to the MTS, which are more than double the volume of the compulsory delivery quotas. The high priced extra quota purchases were to constitute, in 1954, about a fifth of the total government's grain receipts from the collective farms and their members. (*See* M. Moiseev, *Kommunist*, No. 11, 1954, pp. 39 and 52.)

[18] *Pravda*, June 27, 1954.

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of its kind issued during the post-Stalin period which was not accompanied by a report or a speech by Khrushchev. The latter, unlike Malenkov, has not stressed economic incentives in his speeches. Nevertheless, in the second stage of policy the application of economic incentives introduced during the previous year not only was continued but actually was widened. At the same time, however, *kolkhoz* discipline was tightened by increasing the minimum of labor that each *kolkhoznik* was required to perform. Instead of a general annual minimum of so-called "work days" established for a large region, each *kolkhoz* could set up its own minimum, which, however, had to be larger than that previously required.[19]

Phase III: The Corn Craze

THE current third stage of post-Stalin agricultural policy began with the downfall of Malenkov. A significant passage in the deposed premier's "resignation" declared that the reform of agricultural taxation introduced in August 1953 was not among the "errors" he had committed on the agricultural front. This was doubtless a signal to the peasants that the concessions and increased economic incentives granted in 1953–54 would not be abandoned. The *status quo* was to be preserved for the time being at least.

Unlike Soviet light industry, agriculture has been given continued high priority since Khrushchev became the boss in Moscow. This was evidenced by the state's increased budgetary appropriations for agriculture in 1955. Also, the regime's objective of improving the national diet through increased production of animal products was reiterated by Khrushchev in his January 25, 1955, report to the Central Committee and the latter's January 31, 1955, decree on the subject.[20]

A new element in the Khrushchev program is the grandiose corn (maize) expansion campaign aimed at increasing the long-inadequate forage supply and thereby expanding the livestock industry. In the past corn has been a relatively minor crop occupying some 10 million acres (an area exceeded not only by wheat and rye but also by barley and oats); now it is to be expanded to an area of not less than 70 million acres by 1960. This year more than 40 million acres were planted to corn, thus quadrupling the acreage.

In the new campaign Khrushchev, who has long been known as a corn enthusiast, has frankly admitted the influence of the American example. Corn in the United States is the highest-yielding major grain per acre, especially since hybrid seed was introduced and the use of commercial fertilizer increased. It is the basis on which livestock industry, particularly hog raising, has developed. Apparently Mr. Khrushchev presumes the same can be accomplished in Soviet Russia. The fact that the USSR has no corn belt similar to that of the United States, with its unique combination of climatic and soil conditions; the fact that in most regions of the Soviet Union it is either too dry or too cold for a good growth of corn; the fact that there are not as yet proper varieties of corn, nor enough machinery, labor, fertilizer and know-how for a rapid expansion of such a high-labor-consuming crop—none of these has stopped Mr. Khrushchev. To be sure, a relatively small and gradual increase of the corn acreage in some of the more southern regions of the country might not be unsound, but the huge precipitate expansion that has taken place seems to be a precarious undertaking at best.

Certainly reports from the Soviet press during the summer and autumn of 1955 concerning cultivation and harvesting difficulties do not augur well for the corn program. In particular, the press has complained frequently that the cultivation operations necessary to keep the crop free from weeds have been greatly neglected. Apparently the peasants in many regions are averse to the idea of raising corn crops; to overcome their reluctance the Kremlin issued a decree on May 21, 1955, providing special incentives to corn growers.[21] The decree "recommended" (*i.e.*, ordered) that the collective farms, by a decision of their general membership, make supplementary payments to the *kolkhozniki* of up to 15 percent of the harvested corn crop in grain or silage. The decree contains an unprecedented provision that such incentive payments can be made regardless of the fulfillment of delivery obligations to the state, demonstrating the importance attached by the Kremlin to corn culture.

The partial replacement by corn of such well-tried crops as oats and barley seems particularly risky. The corn campaign like the grain expansion on the marginal lands of the eastern regions appears to be a reversal to the unrealistic fad-ism and hastily improvised crash programs of the late Stalin era, some elements of which, such as the indiscriminate planting of perennial grasses in the dry regions, Khrushchev himself has strongly criticized in the past as an example of inefficient agricultural planning.

[19] The new system was revealed not through publication of an official decree but in an article in *Selskoe Khoziaistvo* of August 31, 1954, entitled "The Compulsory Minimum of Work Days for *Kolkhozniki*" by N. Nazartsev.

[20] See footnote 3.

[21] *Selskoe Khoziaistvo*, May 21, 1955: see also *Foreign Crops and Markets*, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Vol. 70, June 6, 1955, pp. 675–676.

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The corn and the grain expansion programs underscore one continuous fundamental weakness of collective agriculture under a totalitarian regime—namely, the ban on public criticism of basic policies of the regime, a ban which is applied relentlessly once an official "line" on some subject has been adopted. It was not lack of knowledge among Soviet specialists that led to the perennial grasses fiasco. As far back as 1881, a well-known authority on Russian agriculture, Prince Vasilchikov, warned against planting grasses in the dry regions.[22] And American experience, which should have served as a warning, was no doubt known to Soviet agricultural experts.[23] But under the Soviet regime even research institutions must tailor the results of their investigations to fit the official line. Thus the Institute of Agriculture of the Southeast, which during the years 1945–48 reported that "perennial grasses dry up the soil and disturb the moisture balance," in 1950 reached exactly the opposite conclusions, in disregard of well known facts about agriculture in the region.[24] It would have been perilous for a Soviet scientist to criticize the official position on perennial grasses until the Kremlin itself had done so. This it finally did through Khrushchev, who in his February 1954 report castigated the "mechanical stereotype" introduction of the grasses and severely reprimanded various subordinate officials concerned.

Khrushchev in his February 1954 report to the Central Committee, and the latter itself in a joint decree with the Council of Ministers of the USSR of March 9, 1955, criticized the "excessive centralization" of agricultural planning in Soviet Russia.[25]

Рисунок В. ПОДПОМОГОВА.

Иные заведующие фермами вот так добиваются увеличения живого веса свиней...

This is the way some farm-managers increase the weight of their livestock. (The bulletin board lists names and weights of individual pigs.)

—From *Krokodil*, September 10, 1955.

This, too, has long been recognized as a weakness by specialists and observers, both Russian and foreign. Thus an eminent Soviet agronomist, N. M. Tulaikov wrote as early as 1936:

> **It is impossible to give directions to a *kolkhoz* according to pre-established prescription . . . how and when to tend the fallow, when to begin and when to end the sowing of spring or winter crops, *etc.*, in order to obtain large yields. Even from the most responsible institutions in Moscow such directions can be given only in case the person who gives the advice knows personally and very well all the conditions under which the *kolkhoz* . . . operates.[26]**

Professor Tulaikov, like many other Soviet technicians, disappeared in the great purge of the 1930's,

[22] A. Vasilchikov, *Selskii Byt i Selskoe Khoziaistvo v Rossii* (Village Life and Agriculture in Russia), St. Petersburg, 1881, p. 100.

[23] This is not to say, however, that the cultural isolation imposed on Soviet science by the iron curtain and by the pseudo-science of Lysenko & Co., sanctioned by Stalin, had no injurious effect on agricultural research and technology. It has, among other things, caused the adoption of obsolescent practices as the latest word in science, such as the check-rowing of corn and other crops which is being discarded in the United States. That the Soviet leadership itself is beginning to realize the handicap the iron curtain presents for scientific and technological progress is evidenced by the eagerness with which it embraced the idea of the *Des Moines Register* regarding the exchange of agricultural delegations in the summer of 1955.

[24] M. Blinkova, S. Benevolskii, V. Kondratiev, *Selskoe Khoziaistvo*, June 19, 1954.

[25] Following the line set forth by Khrushchev, the decree "Concerning the Change of Planning Practice in Agriculture" (*Pravda* and *Izvestia*, March 11, 1955) abandons centrally planned goals of crop acreage and livestock numbers for each collective and state farm. Instead, the government plans the targets for the quantities of agricultural products it desires to acquire through compulsory deliveries at low fixed prices, purchases at higher prices, payments in kind to the machine-tractor stations and delivery on contracts in the case of some technical crops. On the basis of these targets and their own needs, the collective farms with the "participation" of machine-tractor stations must develop acreage and production plans which, however, are subject to a review by the local government (*raion*) authorities. This last provision leaves, of course, a serious loophole for legalized bureaucratic interference by local authorities.

[26] *Osnovy Postroeniia Agrotekhniki Sotsialisticheskovo Zemledeliia* (The Foundation of Farm Technique of Socialist Agriculture), Moscow, 1936, p. 68

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while "excessive centralization" lived on. Whether it will actually be abandoned as a result of the new decree is problematical.

Still another measure initiated by Khrushchev was the decision to dispatch not less than 30,000 "volunteers" from the city elite to head, after a relatively short training period, the backward *kolkhozes*. This move has all the ominous earmarks of the kind of tool used in the past by Stalin to tighten the screws on the collectivized peasantry.

To sum up: Soviet agriculture is destined to remain a chronic "problem-child" so long as the regimented collective system lasts. But it would be unrealistic to expect an immediate breakdown or collapse of the Soviet agricultural economy. It is obvious that better weather and crop conditions than prevailed in 1953 and 1954 are likely to cause an automatic brightening of the agricultural picture, and the 1955 season seems to fit into this category. Although no official data on production have as yet been revealed, the indications are that a good harvest has been reaped despite a number of the problems mentioned earlier. Favorable weather in the important southern granary of the USSR (which had suffered from a serious drought in 1954), coupled with a reported 12 percent increase in the total crop area of collectives,[27] seem to have offset the adverse weather conditions in the eastern and some of the northwestern regions, and the usually large harvesting losses. As a result, a substantial increase over 1954 production is indicated in such important crops as wheat, oilseeds, and sugar beets.

In Soviet Russia the old adage still holds that one good harvest makes up for many years of misrule; hence the longer-range effects and effectiveness of the Malenkov-Khrushchev programs may have to await full assessment at a future date.

[27] A. Tulupnikov, *Pravda*, October 4, 1955.

CHINA

Power Struggle in the Chinese CP: The Kao-Jao Purge

By PETER S. H. TANG

Editor's Note: As commonly used, the term "purge" has come to embrace three different types of punitive action characteristic of Communist regimes: (1) General action to eliminate "counter-revolutionary," *i.e.* anti-Communist, elements among the population at large; (2) periodic purges of the Communist Party rank and file to enforce ideological unity and keep power-hungry cadres in line; and (3) action by the dominant element in the top party leadership to eliminate rivals within the leadership itself. In Communist China the first two types of purge have been commonplace phenomena—witness, for example, the successive "3-anti" and "5-anti" drives of 1951–53 and the new, widespread anti-counterrevolutionary drive currently in progress. It is only the third type which is relatively new to the Chinese Communist regime, and its advent with the Kao-Jao purge therefore assumes particular significance. The author assesses the meaning of this event from the standpoint of the inner struggle for power in the top leadership of the Chinese CP.

IN Communist China, as in the Soviet Union, the strength of the ruling regime varies directly with the internal solidarity of the leadership corps of the Communist Party. The Soviet party (CPSU), in the course of its longer history, has been torn by a number of serious cleavages within the top leadership, struggles which at times have shaken the party from top to bottom, claiming untold numbers of victims. The rarity of similar high-level shake-ups in the Communist Party of China (CPC) before its advent to power led some observers to believe it would be able to avoid the path of the CPSU, resolving its internal dissensions without resort to open strife and the ruthless instrument of the purge.

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The sudden and dramatic announcement on April 4, 1955, of the purge of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih—both figures of high prominence in the Chinese Communist Party—at once shattered this view and raised serious questions concerning the internal solidarity of the CPC leadership. Kao, reputed to be fifth-ranking in the party hierarchy, was a veteran member of the Politburo, onetime party boss of Manchuria, a Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government Council before the adoption of the new 1954 Constitution, and the first head of the State Planning Commission. Jao was a secretary of the party Central Committee, director of the Organization Department of the CPC, and former party boss of East China.

Virtually all that the Peiping regime has chosen to reveal about the purge, including a report of Kao's suicide, was given in a resolution adopted by the National Conference of the party on March 31, 1955, and made public on April 4.[1] Borrowing from Soviet example, it told the familiar cloak-and-dagger story of highly placed leaders suddenly discovered to have been secret conspirators and wreckers throughout much of their long and supposedly honorable careers of party service. According to the resolution, over a year earlier (in Feb. 1954) the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee had established that "from 1949 Kao Kang engaged in conspiratorial activities aimed at seizing the reins of leadership of the party and the state." The details of Kao's alleged conspiracy were enumerated in the resolution as follows:

In Northeast China and other places, he created and spread many rumors slandering the Central Committee of the party and lauding himself, to sow discord and dissension among comrades and stir up dissatisfaction with the leading comrades of the Central Committee . . ., engaged in activities to split the party and in these activities formed his own anti-party faction . . . [This] faction violated the policy of the Central Committee . . . in the work in the Northeast area, tried its utmost to belittle the role of the party, undermined party solidarity and unity, and made the Northeast area the independent kingdom of Kao Kang. Kao Kang's anti-party activities became even more outrageous after his transfer to work in the central organs in 1953. He even tried to instigate party members in the army to support his conspiracy . . . .

Jao Shu-shih's duplicity was of even longer standing, according to the findings of the Central Committee as revealed in the resolution:

. . . In the ten years between 1943 and 1953, Jao Shu-shih on many occasions resorted to shameless deceit in the party to seize power. During his tenure of office in East China, he did his utmost to adopt a rightist policy of surrender to the capitalists, landlords and rich peasants in the cities and countryside. At the same time, he did everything possible to protect counterrevolutionaries in defiance of the Central Committee's policy of suppressing them. After his transfer to the Central Committee in 1953, he thought that Kao Kang was on the point of success in his activities to seize power in the Central Committee. Therefore, he formed an anti-party alliance with Kao Kang and used his office as Director of the Organization Department of the Central Committee to start a struggle aimed at opposing leading members of the Central Committee and actively carried out activities to split the party.

In consequence of these alleged charges, the National Conference voted unanimously to expel Jao and Kao from the party and to remove them from all posts they held both within and outside the party. In the case of Kao the gesture seemed somewhat superfluous since, it was now revealed, he had committed suicide following the CC plenum of February 1954. (This announcement was news in itself since Kao's ominous disappearance from public notice toward the end of 1953 had long been a subject of speculation.) The resolution seemed to bespeak the exasperation of someone whose careful planning has gone awry: not only had Kao not admitted his guilt, but he had dared to take his life, "an expression of his ultimate betrayal of the party." In the case of Jao the harsh punishment of expulsion was deserved since, the resolution complained, he "has never shown any signs of repentance and now persists in an attitude of attacking the party."[2]

Discounting for probable exaggeration in the official charges, there undoubtedly was some basis for the Kao-Jao purge. In this respect the episode sheds light on the general question of the struggle for power within the leadership of the CPC and on three basic questions in particular:

1) Is Mao Tse-tung's position as supreme leader of the party likely to be challenged by any opposing elements within the party's top leadership? More specifically, are there signs of a "pro-Soviet" faction opposed, as has often been alleged, to the "indigenous" leadership of Mao?

2) How does the party leadership react to maintain its position in the face of a challenger? What devices

[1] "Resolution on the Kao Kang-Jao Shu-shih Anti-Party Alliance," Communique of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the National Party Conference (April, 4, 1955), *People's Daily*, April 5, 1955. For the English version as released by the New China News Agency on April 4, see *Current Background*, Hong Kong, No. 324, April 5, 1955.

[2] Since the purge, the Peiping regime has been almost completely silent concerning the whereabouts and fate of Jao. *People's Daily* of April 9, 1955, reported that on the previous day, the Presidium of the Seventh Executive Committee of the All-China Federation of Labor had voted to remove Jao from his membership in the Executive Committee and to expel him from the Federation.

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does it use other than disciplining the accused ringleaders?

3) In the event of Mao's death or withdrawal from effective leadership, will the CPC be able to solve the problem of leadership succession without serious internal dissension?

The Myth of a Kao-Clique Against Mao

IN this writer's view, the events of the recent purge show clearly that no fundamental challenge to Mao's position was intended by the so-called "Kao-Jao anti-party alliance." While the party resolution charged that the "alliance" had attempted "to overthrow the long-tested nucleus of leadership of the Central Committee of the party headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung," the target of the alleged attempt was clearly not Mao, but the men just under him in the "nucleus." Neither Kao nor Jao had ever in the past challenged Mao as the supreme leader, in words or in action. Their real offense as will be seen, was not disloyalty to Mao, but rather failure to give sufficient weight to the position of the other top leaders, especially Liu Shao-ch'i and Chou En-lai who are considered respectively the second and third most important men in the hierarchy.[3]

That Mao's position lay beyond the designs of the dissident faction is attested to by the generally recognized fact that he has always commanded the personal loyalty and obedience of his associates and subordinates. Except for the Chang Kuo-t'ao episode in 1938, about which more will be written later, his leadership of the party has gone completely unchallenged since it was officially established at the Tsengyi Conference of the Politburo in January 1935. Only Chou En-lai can claim longer service in the top party councils, and he seemingly has been content to serve under Mao as a compliant politician and state functionary.[4] Mao, moreover, has made certain that the members of the Politburo and the Secretariat of the Central Committee gained their positions through personal allegiance and devotion to himself, as well as long and faithful service to the party.[5]

Nevertheless, there are a few observers who have forwarded the thesis that the Kao-Jao plot was an attempt on the part of a pro-Soviet clique within the CPC to undermine Mao, viewed as the champion of an alleged "indigenous" policy not in harmony with the desires of Moscow.

In the first place, it seems to this writer that all such wishful picturizations of Mao as a Far Eastern Tito should have been cast aside long since for lack of supporting evidence. The indoctrination efforts of the 1942–44 party reform movement gave full credit to the CPSU as the leader and model to follow in the fight for communism on an international scale. Furthermore, Mao's pronouncement of the "lean to one side" policy in July 1949 placed the new Peiping regime squarely on the side of the Soviet Union in opposition to the camp of "capitalism," and rejected any possibility of a neutral course for Communist China.[6] There is no evidence that this policy of full CPC support for the aims of the world Communist movement has wavered.

In the second place, the dubious hypothesis of a pro-Soviet faction could find support in the events of the Kao-Jao purge only if Kao Kang could be cast in the role of the leader of such a faction. Some observers have attempted to do this by suggesting that Kao maintained especially close ties with Moscow and may even have been hand-picked by Stalin to be the

[3] Liu Shao-ch'i is Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, a member of the Politburo, and Vice Chairman of the party Central Committee (Mao is Chairman). Chou En-lai, a veteran Politburo member, is Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

[4] Chou has served on the Politburo since 1927, whereas Mao, although reportedly a candidate member from 1923 to 1927, did not enter its ranks as a regular member until possibly January 1933. From the early 1930's on, however, Mao enjoyed far greater power and prestige as active party organizer and leading theoretician. These functions he has shared increasingly with Liu Shao-ch'i since the early 1940's.

[5] The present Central Committee, it is true, includes several members who initially rose to prominence in the party independently of Mao or who once held positions of greater power prior to his ascendancy. A few of these men once belonged to the Moscow-trained "returned student group" predominant in central party headquarters in the early 1930's. Any potential factional power of this group, however, was broken in the first large-scale party reform movement of 1942–44, known as the *Cheng-feng* movement, which aimed at the reclarification of the party's basic position on matters of doctrine, organization and discipline, and at the correction of both right and left deviationist tendencies. Mao's position was consolidated beyond all challenge at the Seventh Party Congress in April 1945, which reaffirmed the decision of March 1943 making him Chairman of the Central Committee, the Politburo and the Secretariat, and elected a Politburo of his supporters. The former leaders now serving on the Central Committee have been brought in as individuals with Mao's consent and ostensibly as an act of generosity toward his earlier rivals. Their political careers are dependent upon their loyalty to him.

[6] This policy was enunciated by Mao in his pronouncement, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," issued on July 1, 1949, in commemoration of the 28th anniversary of the CPC. "The Chinese people," he wrote, "either lean to the side of imperialism or to the side of socialism. To sit on the fence is impossible; a third road does not exist. . . . We belong to the anti-imperialist front headed by the USSR, and we can look for genuine friendly aid only from that front, and not from the imperialist front."

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Kremlin's man within the CPC. There have been two apparent grounds for drawing this conclusion: The first is that during the period just after World War II, Kao held a series of important positions in Manchuria while Soviet influence there was at its height, and thus had an opportunity to maintain close contact with the Soviet occupation forces before their withdrawal in May 1946. The second is that in July 1949 he headed a trade mission to Moscow from the so-called Northeast People's Government—the newly established Communist regime in the Manchurian region, of which Kao became Chairman on his return from Moscow. A closer look at Kao's career, however, indicates that on both these counts the evidence fails to support the allegation that he led a pro-Soviet faction within the CPC.

Unlike many other Chinese Communist leaders, Kao had no record of any direct contact with the Soviets prior to his assignment to Manchuria in 1945. Despite his membership in the Politburo, most of his service in Manchuria was as deputy to Lin Piao in a number of military, administrative, and party positions. His rapid advancement seems to have followed the rising fortunes of the Chinese Communists generally, rather than to have resulted from any Soviet intervention on his behalf. As the Communist military offensive against Chiang Kai-shek's forces reached its final stages at the end of 1948, an urgent need arose for experienced leaders to carry out the gigantic task of administrative consolidation of the new regime in the conquered areas. Kao's senior colleagues in the Northeast were consequently called away to other assignments, and it was only then that he attained the top positions in the region.[7]

Moreover, other high-ranking party leaders, such as Lin Piao, Ch'en Yün, Li Li-san, and Li Fu-ch'un, had much closer contact with the Soviet occupation forces, both through their official duties and through their previous personal ties with the Soviet Union, Ch'en and Li Fu-ch'un were also confidants of the party's central leadership in Peiping and thus could easily have checked any effort of Kao's to maintain independent relations with the Soviets.

Circumstances within China, rather than any preference or scheming on the part of Moscow, also explain the choice of Kao to head the 1949 trade mission. At the time, the USSR still recognized the Nationalist Government. In making arrangements to aid the not-yet-established Peiping regime in its further conquests and in its rehabilitation and consolidation efforts, the Soviets undoubtedly preferred to negotiate with an established Communist regional government. It was logical that Kao—as party boss and prospective head of government in the most important region then under Chinese Communist rule—should be chosen for the mission.

The historic position of Manchuria as a sensitive border region between China and Soviet Russia probably has contributed to speculations that Kao enjoyed special favor with the Soviet leaders. Yet had Kao been a tool of Moscow, the USSR would hardly have accepted his downfall without protest; it would have had to look upon the purge as a unilateral action by its Chinese ally threatening the vital Soviet interest in Manchuria. The fact that Moscow concurred in the purge, voicing editorial approval in the official organ of the Cominform, points very clearly to the inaccuracy of this interpretation.[8]

Thus, if there were in fact a pro-Soviet faction within the CPC, Kao would scarcely have qualified as its leader. A much more likely candidate for the role would be Liu Shao-ch'i, the No. 2 Chinese Communist. His close personal ties, loyalty and usefulness to the Soviet Union would make him seemingly the foremost Sovietophile of them all. Aside from his long periods of study and work in the Soviet Union and his service to the Comintern and the Trade Union International, his various theoretical works—*How To Be a Good Communist*, *On the Inner Party Struggle*, *On the Party*, *On Nationalism and Internationalism*, and others—have served well in winning for the Soviet Union and for international communism the sympathy and support of the Chinese Communists.

That Liu (along with Chou En-lai) and not Mao was in fact a main target of the "anti-party alliance," to the extent one existed, is strongly suggested by one of the charges against Kao. As evidence of his attempt to split the party, it was asserted that he had set forth an "absurd theory" distinguishing, within the CPC, between a "party of the revolutionary bases and the army and a party of the white areas." The "white areas" in this theory refer principally to those parts of China which were under the rule of the Nationalist Government after the founding of the armed soviets in the border regions, from the late 1920's on. Both Liu Shao-ch'i and Chou En-lai

[7] At the end of 1948 Kao was made party chief and military commander in the area, and in August 1949 was appointed chairman of the regional government.

[8] The Cominform newspaper *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* (Bucharest, April 8, 1955) described the purge as "one of the decisive victories of the party in the struggle for socialism in China."

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served in those areas.[9] It is to be assumed that by giving voice to this theory, Kao—whose own service was always within the areas under Communist control—sought to belittle the position of the other top leaders and to enhance his own standing.

If this was indeed Kao's intent, he failed miserably. As will be seen, the alleged alliance and certainly the purge itself had the opposite effect of enhancing the power of Liu.

Purge as a Weapon of Unity

THE details of the purge, though meager, reveal a great deal about the way the entrenched power-holders in the party have manipulated the party machinery in order to consolidate their own position in the face of an alleged challenge from a contending element.

In the history of the CPC, the Kao-Jao purge is the third instance of action taken against a principal party leader, the first to lead directly to a dissident's death. The first purge was directed against the party's spiritual father and first Secretary-General, Ch'en Tu-hsiu. Despite his venerable patriarchal position in the party, Mao Tse-tung and other leaders successfully deposed him at the August Seventh (emergency) Conference in 1927. When he refused to submit to "discipline", he was formally expelled from the party after its Sixth Congress late in 1928. In effect, he was made the scapegoat for the debacle suffered by the party when the Kuomintang turned against it in 1927.[10]

The second episode, in 1938, had Chang Kuo-t'ao as its target and followed a prolonged dispute within the party leadership over revolutionary strategy. A founding member of the CPC in 1921, Chang was listed as a Politburo member at various times between 1927 (or earlier) and 1938, and served as a delegate from the CPC to several congresses of the Comintern. He was chairman of the Hupeh-Honan-Anhwei (Oyüwan) Soviet, and served under Mao as Vice-Chairman of the Central Soviet Government of the so-called Chinese Soviet Republic. But Chang was not in full agreement with Mao on the fundamental program of setting up independent soviets within China, regarding them as inapplicable to the Chinese scene. And during the Long March, as leader of the Fourth Front Army, Chang also broke with Mao over the question of the ultimate destination of the March, preferring Sinkiang or Sikang in the remote interior of China to Mao's choice of a more strategic location near Inner Mongolia. After leading his forces to join those of Mao in Northern Shensi, Chang served for a time as Vice-Chairman of the Military Council of the Soviet regime. But he saw the handwriting on the wall when, in late 1936 or shortly thereafter, his own forces were dispersed and assigned elsewhere. In 1938, he managed to escape to an area held by the Kuomintang, whereupon he was expelled from the party.[11]

In contrast with these earlier episodes, the purge of Kao, Jao and their associates comes closer to the Soviet model for eliminating challenges to the ruling clique, and places the Chinese approach to party organization and leadership squarely in line with orthodox Communist thought and practice. Once the Communist Party gains power in a country, it would seem, resort to the purge as the ultimate weapon for maintaining internal leadership solidarity becomes almost inevitable.

It is now clear, in the light of the March 31 resolution of the 1955 party Conference, that both Kao and Jao were strongly warned of the error of their ways at the CC meeting in February 1954. This warning was followed by strenuous efforts, in the early part of 1954, to tighten party discipline at all levels, and particularly in the higher echelons. Corrective measures took the form of a whole series of party

[9] Throughout the eight-year war with Japan, for example, Chou was emissary of Mao at the Nationalist Government headquarters in Hankow, Chungking, and later Nanking. During the same period, Liu served as party Secretary in various regional bureaus away from the party base in Yenan, though in 1943 he did return as a party Secretary to help Mao conduct the party reform movement.

[10] Ch'en was accused of "right deviationism" and "opportunism;" of failure to exercise class criticism against revolutionary allies, to develop the agrarian revolution and the class struggle of the masses, and to win over the armed forces; and, above all, of failure to arm workers and peasants to defeat the "revolutionary attempt" of the "temporary ally"—the Kuomintang. Following his expulsion, Ch'en organized an opposition group of Trotskyist leanings, which he headed until his arrest by the Kuomintang in 1932. Sentenced to 13 years imprisonment, he was released in 1937 and from then until his death in 1942 lived in retirement in Szechuan under guard.

[11] Mao subsequently accused him of "serious sectarianism," of "clamoring to the Central Committee about independence," and of "rebellion against the party." After his break with the Communists, Chang joined the Kuomintang, serving for a time on the Planning Board of its Central Executive Committee. Later on he was active for a short time in an anti-Communist group in Hong Kong called the Democratic Fighting Alliance. According to recent reports, he is now a journalist in Hong Kong. Mao treated this episode in a lecture of February 1, 1942, entitled "Reform in Learning, the Party, and Literature," translated in Boyd Compton, *Mao's China: Party Reform Documents, 1942–1944*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1952, p. 23.

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meetings throughout the country, devoted to "criticism and self-criticism" and to "study" of the CC resolution. Parallel measures were taken through the party press, reinforced by certain administrative actions of the central government. Particularly significant, in view of later developments, was the role of Liu Shao-ch'i in inaugurating the whole movement.

In delivering the Politburo report to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, Liu credited Mao with having initiated at the Politburo meeting on December 24, 1953, a proposal for strengthening party unity. Admitting the need for such a proposal, Liu then spoke out vigorously, but without naming names, against the threat of a division within the upper ranks of the party. His language was echoed in the resolution of the plenum:

. . . Among some of our cadres, even certain high-ranking cadres within our party, there is still a lack of understanding of the importance of party unity and of the significance of collective leadership . . . [These cadres] exaggerate the role of the individual and emphasize individual prestige . . . They even regard the region or department under their leadership as their individual inheritance . . . or independent kingdom.[12]

Liu's report and the resolutions of the plenum constituted a call to "all comrades in the party to raise their revolutionary vigilance and strengthen party unity." This theme was taken up and reemphasized in a series of six editorials which appeared in the central party organ, *People's Daily*, over the next two months. The charges originally made by Liu were repeated and carefully elaborated at great length, still without specifying the culprit.[13]

At the same time, innumerable party meetings were held all over the country at the regional, provincial, municipal and lower levels. These resulted in expressions of determination to support and enforce Liu's resolution on strengthening party solidarity. Throughout this broadly based campaign, it was particularly the "high-ranking cadres"—those who might be susceptible to the appeal of "individual inheritance and independent kingdom"—who were repeatedly and emphatically warned of the need to submit themselves to criticism and self-criticism, that is, to confess their errors and promise to reform.

[12] A communique giving an extensive summary of Liu's report, including his reference to Mao's action in the Politburo, as well as the CC resolution, was published in *People's Daily* on February 18, 1954.

[13] For example, an editorial of April 20, extending Liu's criticism of highranking members to cover "a considerably large portion of our cadres," charged that "in the areas or work departments under their control, they rule as despots." Editorials appeared on February 18, March 22, and April 4, 13, 20, and 23.

While this campaign for party solidarity was providing a kind of psychological preparation for the eventual purge, special attention was devoted to Kao Kang's former region, the Northeast. Between March 26 and April 24, the Northeast Bureau of the party Central Committee held a regional conference for "senior party cadres" on the subject of party unity. The 517 regular delegates were augmented by 190 "observers", undoubtedly including a strong contingent from the Peiping headquarters to make sure that the disciplinary purposes of the meeting would be thoroughly accomplished. The speakers included members of the CPC's Northeast Bureau—though not Kao Kang himself. The line of criticism taken was that the importance of the individual (that is, of Kao) had been exaggerated while the importance of the party leadership had been "minimized" (that is, disregarded). The *Hsinhua* News Agency dispatch on the meeting described the tenor of the conference thusly:

. . . Speeches made by many comrades sharply criticized serious mistakes impeding party unity, damaging party work, and frustrating party progress, as a result of this conceit and individualism . . . At the same time, the conference also pointed out many serious conditions in the Northeast Bureau and some other party organizations; namely, the lack of democratic life, inadequate development of criticism and self-criticism, and the reduction of the collective leadership of the party to a mere formality.[14]

Parallel with these actions of the CPC hierarchy to increase central control and discipline within the party organization, particularly in the Northeast, the central government took action abolishing all regional administrative areas throughout the country. The Northeast Administrative Committee, which had replaced the Northeast "People's Government" in the 1952 reorganization, was abolished as of August 15, 1953, and the principal officials there were dismissed from their posts or assigned elsewhere. As a further sign of the centralization program the Peiping leadership also announced that the regional party and government organ, the Mukden *Northeast Daily*, would cease publication on August 21, and would be supplanted thereafter by the Peiping *People's Daily*, the mats of which were to be sent to Mukden by air mail.

Despite these advance preparations, the culminating action of the purge itself remained a closely guarded secret. As has been seen, official confirmation that the axe had fallen came at the end of the delayed meeting of the party's National Conference of March 1955, the call for which had been issued by the Fourth Plenum over a year before.

[14] Published in *People's Daily* on April 29, 1954.

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The Threat to Party Discipline

IN reviewing the events of the purge, it is evident that the strategic positions held by Kao and Jao within the CPC hierarchy confronted the inner core of the leadership with a serious problem of party control and discipline. This was shown first of all by the nature of the charges against the two offenders. Although a few instances of failure or misconduct in carrying out policies were referred to in the conference resolution, most of the alleged crimes against Kao and Jao, from rumor-mongering to attempts to split the party, constituted violations of party discipline rather than disputes over policy. An editorial in *People's Daily* on April 10, 1955, suggested that the conspirators "dared not publicly bring forward any program or principle against the Central Committee" because they realized that "all party members and the people throughout the country have full confidence in the Central Committee of the party headed by Mao Tse-tung." In the official version, therefore, the motives of the so-called alliance were simply "to seize the supreme power of the party and the state by conspiratorial means." [15]

To meet this threat the National Conference, simultaneously with its action on the Kao-Jao anti-party alliance, approved a change in the machinery of party discipline with the apparent purpose of tightening the grip of the central leadership over the entire hierarchy. Under Chapter VIII of the 1945 party constitution, "discipline inspection committees" had been authorized as organs of control for every membership unit of the CPC, from the lowest to the highest. The work of these committees was further defined by a decision of the Central Committee in November 1949.[16] However, there was no formal provision for the supervision and control of each local inspection committee by the central disciplinary organ. Each local committee was chosen by, and under the control of, the party committee at its particular level. The new arrangement, which substitutes a system of "control committees" for these "discipline inspection committees," emphatically provides that "higher control committees of the party have the right to examine the work of the lower control committees, and the right to examine, approve and change decisions made by lower control committees." The Conference resolution was frank about the reason for this tighter system:

The purpose of this [measure] is to strengthen party discipline and the struggle against all kinds of violation by party members of law and discipline, and particularly to prevent a recurrence of so serious a case as that of the Kao Kang-Jao Shu-shih anti-party alliance which gravely imperiled party interests.[17]

The effect of these changes in the disciplinary machinery will be to make it more difficult in the future for any local or regional party figure to build up strength independent of the inner nucleus of the leadership corps. But they do not entirely do away with the fundamental dilemma of leadership facing a totalitarian party once in power: namely, the danger that, in the effort to concentrate all power at the top, concentrations will be built up at levels just below the top, from which the inner nucleus of leadership may be challenged.

Hence, the fundamental problem becomes one of concentrating organizational power at the higher levels without at the same time allowing too great an accumulation of personal power anywhere outside the innermost nucleus of the leadership. The Kao-Jao purge shows that the CPC, now five years in power, still has not solved this problem, but instead has had to resort to the purge as the ultimate weapon for maintaining its internal stability.

Who Will Succeed Mao?

THE question remains whether the Chinese Communist regime will be able to survive the death or withdrawal of Mao Tse-tung without a disruptive struggle over the leadership succession. Although no definite answer can be given, the events of the purge suggest that if the present power balance continues, Liu Shao-ch'i will be able to succeed to the party leadership without facing too much opposition. Certainly he emerged from the clash with Kao Kang in a much stronger position within the inner nucleus of the party leadership.

Even before the purge, Liu appeared to be the logical candidate to succeed Mao. Among the members of the Politburo, Chu Teh, Lin Tsu-han and Tung Pi-wu are from seven to ten years older than Mao, and of the younger members only Liu and Chou En-lai have shown the caliber necessary to command respect throughout the party. Liu has long appeared to be the stronger of the two and holds the favored place in the party hierarchy as the only Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee under Mao as Chairman. A fellow Hunanese and former schoolmate of Mao, he has been the party's foremost theoretician and spokesman next to Mao and has served as the latter's alter-

[15] See footnote 1.

[16] This decision is cited in the National Conference resolution of March 31, 1955 (See footnote 1). It has also been reproduced in *Current Background*, No. 324, April 5, 1955.

[17] *Loc. cit.*

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nate on several occasions when he was ill or absent. Liu has also had practical experience in trade union and party work in all principal parts of the country and is reported to have a wide following among high-level party officials and senior cadres.

It is significant that Liu, in bringing the charges against Kao (though not by name) in the Fourth Plenum, did so in the name of collective leadership, and in opposition to the individualism shown by anyone presuming to set himself up as the ruler of an "independent kingdom." As long as Mao remains in the top party position, though reportedly in ill health, Liu apparently intends to hold on to his own position as second in command through enforcing the principle of "collective leadership." The March 31 resolution of the National Conference confirms this strategy in calling for a continued "fight against the tendency toward personal dictatorship and fragmentation which undermines the principle of collective leadership."[18]

The events of the purge make it clear that Liu played the stronger hand in the struggle as compared to Chou En-lai. Chou's authority lies mainly with the state machine, he has less standing and a smaller following in the party itself.

The short-run outcome of the purge and of the measures for tighter party discipline is thus essentially an enhancement of Liu's prestige and a consolidation of the immense power he wields by virtue of his positions in the central party organs. He now emerges as the CPC's strongest personality after Mao and as its real driving force. Unless he should be too impatient to take over the "throne" and should challenge Mao's position directly—a very unlikely prospect—the stability and inner cohesion of the CPC seem assured for the present. In the event that Mao should disappear from the scene, it seems likely that Liu, through appealing to the principle of "collective leadership" during a transitional period, may be able to emerge as the Khrushchev, with Chou En-lai as the Bulganin, of the post-Mao era. Such a prediction must remain, however, within the realm of speculation.

While the Kao-Jao purge thus appears to have resolved the intra-party struggle for power in the CPC for the foreseeable future, the problem of maintaining leadership solidarity is one which must always continue to plague a Communist totalitarian regime, be it the Chinese, Russian or any other. The reinforcement of the CPC's disciplinary machinery will undoubtedly lessen the threat of internal dissension to some degree, but it will not, as emphasized earlier, eliminate the danger of opposition elements growing up at the level just below the top party leadership.

The trend in the CPC in anticipation of Mao's eventual death or retirement seems to be in the direction of the collective leadership principle already being followed in the Soviet Union. Collective leadership, however, implies a delicate balancing of contending forces and personalities, which by its very nature appears more susceptible to upset than the individual dictatorship of a Stalin or a Mao. Whether or not it will solve the leadership problems of the two major Communist regimes thus remains highly problematical, and only time can provide the final answer.

[18] See footnote 1.

ERRATUM

Due to an unfortunate oversight on the part of the editors, an important credit was omitted in Randolph Carr's article, "Conflicts Within the Indian CP" (*Problems of Communism*, No. 5, 1955, p. 8). Footnote 6 should have read as follows:

> [6] Zhukov, "Obostrenie krizisa kolonialnoi sistemy" (The Growing Crisis of the Colonial System), *Bolshevik*, Moscow, December 15, 1947. The information in the foregoing paragraph on the differences in Moscow regarding the course to be pursued by the Indian CP is drawn from John Kautsky's pioneering study, "Indian Communist Party Strategy Since 1947" (*Pacific Affairs*, New York, June 1955).

The omission of the appropriate credit to Mr. Kautsky's article is sincerely regretted.

—The Editors

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Bulgaria: A Study in Satellite Non-Conformity

By E. O. STILLMAN AND R. H. BASS

THE record of the Communist regime in Bulgaria over the 10-odd years of its existence, especially in the two and one-half years since the death of Stalin, presents a highly illuminating case study in Soviet-satellite relationships. It reveals that the Bulgarian course not only has differed throughout from the general satellite pattern but also, in the post-Stalin period, has consistently been out of step with the major shifts in Soviet policy faithfully mirrored in the rest of the orbit.

Only enough need be said concerning the nine-year record of the Bulgarian Communist regime in the Stalinist period (1944–53) to show that the regime's divergence from the general satellite pattern then lay in the greater precocity with which it sought to ape the Soviet model, in contrast to its post-Stalin reluctance to follow the rest of the orbit in hewing to changed Moscow policies. After a brief initial period in which it nominally shared power with the Agrarians and other left-wing parties in the Fatherland Front coalition government, the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) in 1945 began a process of ruthless liquidation of these allies, culminating in the trial and execution of the Agrarian Party leader Nikola Petkov in September 1947.

Concurrently with the elimination of political opposition, the regime embarked upon a doctrinaire program designed to remake Bulgaria's backward rural economy in the image of the USSR. Its plans were formulated in plain disregard of the fact that the country already possessed an egalitarian land system plagued more by under-capitalization than by inequities in farm ownership, and that it also lacked the broad material resources essential to the building of a modern industrial state.

The collectivization program, in particular, was pushed ahead with much greater energy and speed than in the other satellites. Starting with no more than 110 units in 1944, the regime first extended a thin network of collectives throughout the countryside, establishing at least one unit in each rural community. This objective achieved, a period of shock offensives followed during 1948–50. In the last twelve months of this period alone, the regime organized 31.7 percent of the arable land and 369,145 peasant households into 979 collective farms, and by the end of 1951, fully 51.7 percent of the arable land in Bulgaria and 52 percent of the rural population had been absorbed.[1]

Equally significant was the fact that the Bulgarian regime, in carrying out this program, rejected the cautious organizational tactics of its sister satellites. Generally speaking, the collective farm in the other satellites took multiple forms, of varying degrees of severity in their impact on the private property rights of the individual peasant. (In Czechoslovakia and Poland there were four types, in Hungary three, in Rumania two.) Only the most advanced of these approached the thoroughly communized character of the Soviet prototype, or *artel*. In Bulgaria the single form was the "Labor-Cooperative Agricultural Farm" (TKZS), the regime apparently considering it unnecessary to grant even the most reluctant peasant a choice of lesser evils. Up to April 1950, this form recognized the peasants' theoretical rights of unrestricted sale and mortgage of his land, but even these purely nominal rights were emasculated by revisions in 1950–51.[2]

Mr. Stillman has travelled in and written extensively about Eastern Europe, especially Bulgaria. Mr. Bass has taught modern history at Columbia University, New York, and is currently preparing a book on Thomas Masaryk. Their article is the sixth in *Problems of Communism*'s series on recent developments in the East-European "people's democracies."

[1] The regime actually claimed 60.5 percent of the arable land by 1951, but the accuracy of this claim is questionable. For a full discussion of the problem, see *Satellite Agriculture in Crisis*, F. Praeger, New York, 1954, p. 62.

[2] The new Exemplary Standard Statute of the TKZS, introduced April 5, 1950, still recognized the peasant's right of sale but restricted him to a single purchaser—the TKZS or its individual members. This right was finally abrogated on August 31, 1951. See *Izvestia na Presidium*, September 4, 1951.

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Bulgarian policies of capital investment in the pre-New Course era were similarly dogmatic in their aping of the Soviet model. The Two-Year Plan (1947–48) assigned only 6 percent of total funds to agriculture in a nation where 80 percent of the population lived on the land. The first Five-Year Plan (1948–53), while more than doubling this amount, still brought gross expenditures for agriculture to only a meager 13 percent of total investments.[3] Farm production remained far below its pre-war level, yet the plan envisaged no more than a 37 percent increase as against a 226 percent increase in the industrial output of producers' goods.[4]

New Course—Bulgarian Style

AGAINST this backdrop, it would have been quite normal had Premier Vulko Chervenkov, in his September 8, 1953 address outlining the Bulgarian version of the New Course, spoken in the same tone of conciliation, concession and retreat voiced by his counterparts elsewhere in the orbit.[5] Yet just the reverse was true. While the other satellite leaders exhibited open embarrassment over the failures of earlier years, Chervenkov endorsed the regime's record in these unequivocal terms:

The general policy of the party has been tried and has brought about the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan in four years. The fulfillment of the Second Five-Year Plan must bring the complete domination of socialism in our entire economy, in the further development of our industry, transportation, science and arts, and in the further improvement of the material and cultural well-being of the workers. This will happen only by following stubbornly and unconditionally the general policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party.[6]

This basic note of firmness was not weakened by Chervenkov's indulgence in a certain modicum of routine Communist self-criticism. Thus, he conceded shortcomings in the performance of the Machine Tractor Stations (MTS), in the organization and administration of the collective farms, in the functioning of the bulk-purchasing agencies and retail food outlets, and in other sectors of the economy. He admitted that the bureaucracy had grown inflexible and arbitrary and stood in need of reform and revitalization. In the same vein, he acknowledged the desirability of higher living standards, reviewing past official price-reduction measures and promising more reductions in the future.

All this was but perfunctory lip-service to the spirit of the New Course. For nowhere in his speech did Chervenkov announce any substantial retreat from established positions. He offered no significant and concrete concessions either to the peasantry or to the urban workers. His major contention, indeed, was that essentially the state economic apparatus was functioning well and merely needed a few minor adjustments rather than any fundamental reform.

Thus, in agriculture, there would be no change in basic policies, but merely a shift in emphasis along certain lines:

More means must be invested in development . . . for modernization and mainly for strengthening the MTS with a material basis and cadres; for strengthening cooperative and state farms, for new tractors, combines . . . electrification and irrigation. . . .

Similarly, in industry, greater emphasis would be placed on the production of consumer goods, but efforts to develop heavy industry would continue on a more realistic basis:

We have no need to tackle a task which would be beyond our strength—namely, to develop in our country all branches of heavy industry . . . The socialist camp enables the member countries to plan their industrialization so that each develops those branches of heavy industry for which it has the most favorable conditions. . . .
The ratio between the rates of development of heavy and light industry during the second Five-Year Plan must be changed to increase consumer goods production and it should be understood that in the future . . . in the general continuous growth of public production, priority will be given to increasing consumer goods production.[7]

Another significant divergence from the general New Course pattern in the other satellites was Chervenkov's marked attention to foreign policy. He devoted a considerable portion of his September 8 speech to a review of the Korean armistice and a critique of American policy in Europe, curiously coupling the latter with an almost warm appeal for the resumption of diplomatic relations between the United States and Bulgaria.[8] He also seized the opportunity to review Bulgaria's relations with Greece and Yugoslavia and to stress Bulgarian willingness to conduct correct and friendly relations with all neighboring states, Cominformist, Titoist, or capital-

[3] See *Economic Survey of Europe in 1948*, Geneva, 1949, p. 203.

[4] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, December 29, 1948.

[5] For example, Hungarian Premier Imre Nagy, in a statement published in *Szabad Nep*, July 5, 1953, said: "We must note and state frankly before the entire nation that the objectives of the augmented Five Year Plan are beyond our strength, its implementation is vastly overtaxing our resources . . . The development of the socialist heavy industry cannot be an end in itself . . ."

[6] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, September 9, 1953.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Diplomatic relations were suspended in 1949 following the Bulgarian Government's refusal to retract its demand for the recall of United States Minister Donald Heath. The Bulgarian Government charged that Heath had been in contact with Traicho Kostov, who was tried and executed (December 16, 1949) for treason.

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THE BULGARIAN PRESS ON CONSUMER GOODS . . .

Caption: No comment.

—From *Sturshel*, Sofia, February 4, 1955.

ist. These overtures, again, reflected Bulgaria's own special need for a relaxation of tensions in southeastern Europe more than any sphere-wide design prescribed by Moscow.

Taken as a whole, therefore, the Bulgarian New Course as enunciated by Chervenkov showed striking variations from the pattern in the other satellites. By comparison, however, it was a remarkably astute effort. Chervenkov's determined refusal to hold out explicit promises gave his speech the outward appearance of a relatively rigid policy pronouncement, but actually it allowed the regime a high degree of flexibility in revising its policies later. Further, it clearly reaffirmed the official doctrine with respect to collectivization and served unmistakable notice that the regime in 1953 was primarily concerned with the stability of the existing order rather than with its revision in response to transient currents of reform.

The 15 months following the September 8 address may be rated as a period of slow and cautious readjustment. The second Five-Year Plan (1953–1957), as outlined by Vice-Premier Chankov in March 1954, reflected a desire to eliminate "major disproportions" in the economy.[9] It took the form, however, not of a drastic redistribution of investments between the industrial and agricultural sectors, but rather of increased investments in *both* major branches of the economy.

Within the industrial sector, the output of producers' goods was to be expanded at a faster rate, the final goal being set at a 78 percent increase over 1952 as compared with an expansion of only 48 percent in light and consumer goods production. But the earlier attempt to achieve industrial diversity was to be curtailed in favor of intensive development of the raw materials and power base. No less than 28 percent of the capital investments earmarked for industry was to go for electrification, while investments in coal extraction were to exceed those of the first Five-Year Plan by 500 percent.

BCP directives on the second Five-Year Plan suggested further that, in addition to increased capital investments, the regime would rely heavily on a substantial augmentation of labor productivity.[10] Stepped-up mechanization, reorganization of work, intensified "socialist competitions," and an increased supply of skilled labor were scheduled to raise work productivity in industry by no less than 35 percent by 1957.

[9] Chankov's speech: Radio Sofia, March 1, 1954.

[10] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, March 6, 1954.

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Mechanization was to be furthered by increased imports of capital equipment under a network of new trade agreements with other orbit countries. The provisional trade protocol with the Soviet Union, made public on February 11, 1954, set the pattern for these agreements, providing for an exchange of Soviet industrial equipment, tractors, agricultural machines, automobiles, chemicals, and cattle for Bulgarian nonferrous metals, ores, foods and wood products.[11]

The regime's approach to the problem of living standards also displayed considerable caution. The price reductions of August 2, 1953, were followed by another round of cuts on March 28, 1954.[12] Officially it was claimed that the first reductions augmented the national purchasing power by 900 million *leva* (132.3 million U. S. dollars) and the second by 970 millions (U. S. 142.6 million). The actual benefit from these reductions was partially nullified, however, by a compulsory state loan in the amount of 400 million *leva* (U. S. 58.8 million) announced on February 9, 1954. Subscriptions to the loan were limited to private as against corporate persons, which meant that individual citizens had to bear the entire burden without aid from state enterprises and collective farms. Thus, in effect, they were forced to "contribute" to the expenses of the second Five-Year Plan a significant percentage of the money which the state had promised them for the purchase of consumer goods.

[11] Similar agreements concluded with Czechoslovakia (May 22) and with Hungary (June 17) confirmed Bulgaria's specialization as a raw materials and agricultural producer. Imports included electrical and transportation equipment, machinery and chemicals.

[12] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, March 28, 1954. Price cuts ranged from 5 to 12 percent on food items and 5 to 25 percent on footwear, hosiery, and fabrics.

No Retreat in Agriculture

BULGARIAN agricultural policy during this period was founded on three basic premises: that investments could be increased substantially; that work discipline in the TKZS would improve in response to better leadership and higher material incentives; and that collectivized agriculture, as opposed to small-scale private cultivation, could retain its predominance over the Bulgarian countryside. Implementation of the policy began on October

. . . AND ON LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Caption above: In Novi Pazar county cattle-breeding is lagging. The average milk production amounts to 440 liters per cow per annum.

Caption below: —Why do you need grass, Grannie?
—To feed my goat.
—Why do you need a goat?
—Ha! . . . She gives me more milk than your cows.

—From *Sturshel*, April 29, 1955.

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13, 1953, with a decree cancelling tax arrears for the TKZS and reducing compulsory delivery quotas.[13] This was followed the next day by an announcement that agricultural investments would be doubled during the remainder of the current economic plan.[14] The regime then launched an intensive propaganda campaign to publicize the shortcomings of the collective farms in preparation for the third National Conference of the TKZS, scheduled to convene on December 1, 1953.

Speaking at the Conference, Premier Chervenkov emphasized the urgent need for greater numbers of trained technicians as well as for their proper utilization by the TKZS and local party organizations. He echoed the Soviet complaint that too many agricultural experts preferred to sit behind desks in the government ministries rather than work in the fields. He further stressed that, while the regime would not press for the forcible establishment of additional collectives, it would bend its energies to the task of strengthening and improving the existing TKZS network.

These trends were definitively confirmed by the principal speeches and decisions of the Sixth Party Congress in February 1954. Viewing the second Five-Year Plan as a whole, Vice-Premier Chankov told the Congress that capital investments in agriculture and livestock breeding would increase 2.3 times, as compared with the years 1948–52, amounting to an absolute total of 3 billion *leva* (U. S. 441.2 million) for the 5-year period.[15] The production of livestock would receive special priority in an effort to reattain the prewar level of 1939, and particularly extensive measures would be taken to increase the number of livestock on the TKZS.

During the ensuing months, the regime hewed rigidly to the program which it had imposed upon itself. In particular, it continuously urged self-improvement by individual TKZS, stressing the need for free initiative from below, "collective farm democracy," and an end to arbitrary and nepotistic practices by TKZS chairmen. It clearly hoped that such reforms on the local level would help to turn the tide toward increased production.

Yet, either because it was not entirely confident of the efficacy of these remedial measures or because it recognized the need of a more tranquil atmosphere during the crucial period of readjustment, the Bulgarian regime acted throughout 1954 to reinforce its economic decisions by both external and internal political moves. In the external field, the regime displayed considerable eagerness to implement its already announced policy of normalizing relations with Greece and Yugoslavia. In May 1954 a provisional agreement to re-establish diplomatic relations with Athens was concluded, and in October Bulgaria further agreed to pay reparations to Greece substantially on the latter's terms despite Greek participation (with Turkey and Yugoslavia) in the pro-Western Balkan Alliance.

Efforts to restore friendly relations with Yugoslavia were also pressed with determination. A new Yugoslav ambassador was received in Sofia in December 1953; a month later a railroad agreement was concluded; and in the spring of 1954 a joint Yugoslav-Bulgarian Border Commission began work. By the end of 1954, not only had the border problem been successfully resolved, but a new Bulgarian-Yugoslav trade agreement had been reached—the first such agreement between a Cominform country and the Tito regime since the rupture of relations in 1948.

Political Pacification Moves

BUT, successful as these diplomatic moves were in relieving external pressures, they could not be of more than marginal assistance to the regime in solving its internal difficulties. For this reason, rather than because of a more subtle intent to move in the direction of a long-range ideological rapprochement, the regime in mid-1954 became the first satellite to attempt a reconciliation with its own eclipsed "national" Communists and long-persecuted agrarian leaders. Linked with this was a systematic effort to effect the return of prominent Bulgarian oppositionists in exile.

The clear aim of this new departure in satellite internal policy was to inspire confidence and respect, not through the older device of terror, but by creating the illusion that the regime's former enemies and critics—each with his own following among the people—had joined hands with the ruling party in the belief that its program had come to excel their own. The timing of the campaign clearly pointed to its real motivation. The initial moves came not long after revelations in the Bulgarian press that an officially sponsored nation-wide program of "criticism and self-criticism" had frequently degenerated into "slander" against the party and the government. When the

[13] *Otechestven Front*, October 13, 1953.

[14] *Radio Sofia*, October 14, 1953.

[15] Similarly, the Law on the State Plan for 1954, promulgated in April, called for a sharp 58.8 percent increase in capital investments for agriculture over 1953. The overall increase for agriculture and industry combined was to be 41.2 percent, with a rise of only 13.9 percent in investments for heavy industry alone. *Rabotnichesko Delo*, April 10, 1954.

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moves were made, moreover, it was already known that the 1954 harvest would not come up to official expectations.

The campaign began with a relatively undramatic, yet revealing, development. In August 1954 the government unexpectedly honored Vice-Premier Anton Yugov by awarding him the Order of Georgi Dimitrov on his fiftieth birthday. This was chiefly significant because Yugov had been prominently associated with the "nationalist" wing of the BCP, which fell into discredit after the 1949 trial of Traicho Kostov, former No. 2 party leader, on "Titoist" charges. Although Yugov had continued to hold various government posts, he was definitely under a political cloud until the regime's sudden gesture marked the beginning of his restoration to top-level influence.[16]

The next few months witnessed a whole series of new conciliation moves. September saw the sudden reappearance in Sofia of two former members of the Bulgarian National Committee in exile, Petur Trifunov and Milerad Mladenov, who publicly "renounced" their "past errors," attacked the futility and corruption of life in exile, and declared their "hope" and "desire" to contribute to the building of the "new Bulgaria." It also saw the curious trial of General Ivan Vulkov, 83-year-old participant in the 1923 *coup d'etat* against the government of the Agrarian Party leader Alexander Stambolisky. Vulkov was sentenced to death for his "crimes" of thirty years earlier, which allegedly included the assassination of Stambolisky (killed in the 1923 revolt) and responsibility for a subsequent reign of terror in which numerous agrarian and Communist "anti-Fascist fighters" were "murdered."

On the heels of the Vulkov trial came the release from prison of Tsvetan Maximov and Asen Pavlov, both former lieutenants of the liquidated agrarian leader Nikola Petkov.[17] This was followed in November by the sudden resurrection from obscurity of Stoyl Stefanov, venerable leader of the prewar Bulgarian National Agrarian Union (BNAU), who signified his reconciliation with the regime by appealing to the peasants to join a revived Agrarian Party within the Communist-controlled Fatherland Front.

Thus, an ever-increasing number of individuals who had once been of either national or regional importance re-emerged from enforced retirement or from the state's political prisons. Each was asked to pay a two-fold price: to denounce the Bulgarian anti-Communist exiles and, more significantly, to endorse the hastily contrived and synthetic friendship between the Communists and the relics of Bulgaria's past agrarian tradition.

In December the regime made another symbolic gesture by declaring the Stambolisky Museum in Sofia a national monument, following this up with a one-year extension of the amnesty affecting illegal escapees from the country.[18] In short, no effort was spared to impart vigor and conviction to a campaign the two major objectives of which were to discredit and undermine the anti-Communist opposition at home and abroad, and to foster the impression among the peasantry that the Communists and agrarians were once again working together in its interest.

Still, at the end of 1954, the regime was forced to acknowledge that its big politico-economic offensive had not succeeded in solving the crucial agricultural problem. This acknowledgment was implicit in the hasty adoption of a series of additional economic measures. New decrees easing livestock, tobacco and cotton delivery quotas for the collective farms were announced, effective January 1, 1955.[19] On January 31 the Central Committee of the BCP approved a comprehensive supplementary plan for bolstering the TKZS.[20] The 1955 State Budget, made public on February 1, reflected determination to increase capital investments in agriculture still further.[21]

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[16] Yugov, prior to his decline, had held the powerful post of Minister of Interior. Since his return to favor, he has risen to No. 2 position in the BCP next to Chervenkov. Other members of the "nationalist" wing have likewise been restored to leading party positions.

[17] Maximov had been an organizer and leader of the Agrarian Youth, and Pavlov had been Minister of Agriculture in the Fatherland Front coalition government of 1944–46.

[18] The amnesty, originally announced in 1953 coincident with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of "liberation," received relatively little publicity at first, but it subsequently assumed considerable importance as a regime propaganda tool.

[19] *Izvestia na Presidium*, December 31, 1954. Obligatory cotton and tobacco delivery quotas for collective farms were slightly reduced, and changes in livestock production requirements likewise had the effect of reducing meat quotas for the TKZS by some 20 percent.

[20] *Zemedelsko Zname*, February 3, 1955. The plan's most important provisions were: (a) Decreases in cash and kind payments by the TKZS to the MTS; (b) reductions in seed prices; (c) reductions in compulsory insurance premium payments by TKZS installations; (d) a reduced interest rate on commercial and corporate (i. e., TKZS) construction loans; (e) higher state purchase prices for grains, fruits, vegetables, and linseed and other oils.

[21] *Otechestven Front*, February 2, 1955. The budget allowed for 16 new MTS, and delivery of 2,206 tractors (measured in 15 h. p. units), 871 combines and 497 trucks. The tractor figure falls below the 2,719 promised for 1954, but the unit allotments of other types of farm machinery are appreciably increased.

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Admission of Defeat

HOWEVER, it was not until the Fourth National Conference of the TKZS, February 15-17, that the regime saw fit to make a full confession of failure. When he addressed the conference, Premier Chervenkov's tone and emphasis showed a considerable change from his confident declarations at the Third National Conference in December 1953:

We did not attain success in our work for higher average yields, and we were not able to fulfill the decisions of the Sixth Party Congress . . . Production [in 1954] was poor. Such average yields as 120–130 kilograms of wheat or 50–60 kilograms of tobacco per decare [0.2741 acre] are very low and inexcusable . . . The inevitably resulting difficulties were overcome only thanks to existing state reserves.[22]

Chervenkov explained that this state of affairs was partly due to "natural calamities" and bad weather, but he stressed that "the main reason, in the end, lies in our work and ourselves." He also made the following critical observations based on a personal inspection tour of the country's most highly collectivized areas:

The reasons for poor results [were] bad labor organization, poor management! Robberies occur and everybody points to the thieves, but nobody arrests them. People work the fields intensively, but for months at a time not a single administrator goes there. The president of the kolkhoz . . . the party secretary . . . the president of the control council . . . and many members—relatives of the executives—have withdrawn huge sums in advance and much in produce . . . Members of the control council . . . take for personal use more land than is permissible and arbitrarily award themselves a great number of "work days" for "control work." In too many kolkhozes the responsible administrators use their positions for personal benefit . . . Comrades, such occurrences are too frequent, and they are of the most dangerous kind . . . The abuse of position, the thefts, the corruption must not be tolerated; they must be fought.[23]

The Minister of Agriculture also addressed the conference, giving some revealing indications of the extent of losses incurred in consequence of the conditions described by Chervenkov:

. . . the rice was not harvested and thrashed on time. As a result, the rice fermented and was unusable . . . There are more than three million kilograms of such rice in the country . . . Because of [other] faults, our economy lost thousands of tons of raw cotton from the 1954 crop and the state was forced to import cotton from abroad . . . We lost thousands of tons of oriental tobacco . . . Because of the non-fulfillment of the grain plan . . . the food supply of the population was threatened and the state had to dig into its reserves.[24]

These revelations called for decisive measures. Three days after the conference adjourned, 39 persons were convicted on 240 counts of theft of communal property. Two were sentenced to death, five others to 20 years imprisonment, and the rest to varying prison terms ranging up to 15 years.[25] In another trial two days later, five party functionaries received long jail sentences for embezzling funds belonging to collective farms.[26] On March 13 Chervenkov, speaking at a district party meeting in Pleven, voiced the following warning:

The party member does not possess and is not entitled to possess any privileges and favors not shared with other citizens . . . The party cannot tolerate members who are covetous of more important and easier jobs, or who show willingness to benefit themselves or their relatives.[27]

These and other steps which followed were evidence of the essential pragmatism of Bulgarian policy. By its acts and decisions during January and February, the regime implicitly conceded the failure of half-measures and recognized that popular discontent was both deep-seated and widespread. The focal point of this discontent in Bulgaria's agrarian society was not the imposition of long factory hours and low wages as in industrialized Czechoslovakia, but the rapacity and incompetence of the Communist bureaucracy entrenched in the country's 2,747 collective farms.

After chastising these elements by means of the show trials, the regime proceeded to consolidate and reorganize 108 existing state farms into 49 expanded units capable of pooling their equipment and requiring fewer administrators.[28] On April 24, 1955, new price reductions were granted affecting foodstuffs, textiles and farm implements.[29] Finally, on May 20, a decisive step was taken to stimulate initiative and enterprise among both collectivized and private farmers through a decree providing for a certain measure of decentralization in agricultural planning. In announcing this belated decision, the regime acknowledged that the centralized methods of agricultural planning hitherto employed "contain major shortcomings":

Experience shows . . . that it is not necessary to assign every farm a sowing plan . . . because this inhibits the development of initiative for improved farm management

[22] *Zemedelsko Zname*, February 17, 1955. Average yields of wheat and tobacco in 1930–37 were 135 and 91 kilograms per decare, respectively. See *Statistical Yearbook of Bulgaria*, Sofia, 1939.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Otechestven Front*, February 20, 1955.

[26] *Ibid.*, February 22, 1955.

[27] Radio Sofia, March 13, 1955.

[28] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, March 20, 1955.

[29] Reductions on food items ranged from 10 to 33 percent, on clothing and textiles 10–45 percent, and on farm implements 12–17 percent. Radio Sofia, April 24, 1955.

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by producers. Detailed planning of agriculture from the center in numerous cases also fails to take entirely into account local climatic, soil and economic conditions.[30]

In effect, the decree provided that henceforth the state would be content to formulate its unconditional minimum requirements and would leave it to the TKZS, the MTS and private farmers to determine, within certain limits, how these demands should be met. Plans worked out by individual collectives and other units were expected to remain subject to close supervision and approval by ministerial departments.[31] Still, there is no doubt that the effect of the decree was to heighten the farmers' sense of participation in shaping their own economic future.

It is still too early to estimate whether these new policies are achieving the results hoped for by Bulgaria's Communist rulers, or, for that matter, whether such results can ever be attained within the framework of the existing Communist system. Nevertheless it does appear that the regime has finally yielded before the overwhelming pressure of economic necessity and is now attempting to impart the greatest possible flexibility to institutions which are the legacy of the Stalinist era.

Conclusion and Outlook

THUS, the Bulgarian course in the post-Stalin period has consistently departed from the general pattern observable in the rest of the Soviet orbit. During 1953–54, the Bulgarian regime executed no major retreat from Stalinist policies such as marked the New Course in the Soviet Union and, much more so, in the other East European satellites. Now, in a year which has been chiefly marked by a contraction of internal concessions in those countries, Bulgaria has at last acknowledged the failure of the halfway remedies of 1953–54 and is moving toward a broadening, rather than a contraction, of its program of internal economic reform and foreign conciliation.

One important conclusion that may be drawn from the Bulgarian example is that the conventional theory which pictures the satellites as uniformly following a hard and inflexible policy line handed down by Moscow is open to question. The truth seems to be that local conditions—in particular, the structure of the economy, the morale of the party and bureaucratic apparatus, and the degree and effectiveness of popular resistance—influence individual satellite policy as much as does any sphere-wide design.

The anomalies of Bulgarian policy further suggest that there may be need for a reassessment of the character and significance of the New Course itself. These anomalies become comprehensible only if the New Course is equated not so much with a detailed program of fixed character as with a general set of principles still applicable, with variations, throughout the Soviet orbit. Restated in these terms, it becomes a broad and flexible plan calculated to relieve the most obvious internal and external tensions and thus permit the development of the economic and political potential of the orbit countries in a more pragmatic and rational fashion.

Considered as a whole, the events of 1953–55 suggest that the Bulgarian version of the New Course—which may be defined as a cautious re-appraisal of the legacy of Stalinism—may have been truer to the original conception, as redefined above, than the violent and excessive shifts of policy witnessed in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The decollectivization crises, the spread of industrial indiscipline, and the deterioration of party morale in these two satellites can only have been the consequences of an incautious policy—a policy which ignored the fundamental strains and centrifugal tendencies of any Communist society.

The Bulgarian regime, on the contrary, was content to move slowly and cautiously, preferring to face the consequences of insufficient rather than of precipitate and ill-considered action. Having avoided any exaggerated reversal of policy detrimental to stability, it finds itself in the enviable position, as compared with its fellow satellites, of having to retract nothing.

This record of cautious and grudging experimentation is very likely explicable in terms of the nation's geographical position, exposed as it is to the most direct pressures from Titoist Yugoslavia and the Balkan Alliance. Because of these pressures, it seems probable that Moscow considers Bulgaria's internal stability and the integrity of its frontiers of more vital importance than any relatively insignificant reinforcement of the Soviet bloc's overall economic strength through increased Bulgarian productive efficiency.

Hence, despite the fact that Bulgaria again appears to be moving in a divergent direction from the rest of the orbit in the era of the "new New Course," its continued pursuit of a cautious, gradualistic policy of internal economic reform probably meets with Kremlin approval. It is hardly conceivable that Moscow would insist upon a reversal of this policy at the sacrifice of political security.

[30] Radio Sofia, May 20, 1955.

[31] The regime's reluctance to loosen its economic grip and its essential mistrust of the peasantry were reconfirmed in July by a decree attempting to classify all arable land into four categories of suitability for cultivation of specific crops. (See *Izvestia na Presidium*, July 12, 1955.) So far as is known, however, this measure did not abrogate the earlier decision to decentralize planning.

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The Road to Stalinism

An excerpt from *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy,* by Leonard Schapiro *

Editor's Note: The following passage is from Mr. Schapiro's recently published comprehensive study of the early phases of Soviet rule in Russia. The excerpt, taken from Mr. Schapiro's final chapter (and slightly abridged for reasons of space) deals with the motives and forces underlying Lenin's consolidation of control in 1921, which in the author's view paved the way for Stalin's later usurpation of power. For an analytical review of the book, and for an explanation of the various political groups and concepts mentioned in the text below, the reader is referred to "Lenin's Counterrevolution," by Ronald Thompson, p. 38.

THE victory of the Bolsheviks in November 1917 did not mean the victory of a united party. The struggles which reached their culmination at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921 need have caused no surprise. Lenin's rapid and sudden switches of doctrine in response to the exigencies of policy placed considerable strain on the loyalty of his bewildered followers. One need only recall as instances the sudden abandonment in April 1917 of the two orthodox phases of revolution; the repeated promise of revolutionary war jettisoned in favor of an immediate peace on any terms in March 1918; the rapid ending of workers' control; and the sudden and unheralded switch from war communism to the New Economic Policy. To anyone who based his conduct on a political theory it was no easy matter to follow Lenin through these many mutations of his policy.

Yet for all this, it was not solely or primarily from the failure of Lenin's followers to realize as rapidly as Lenin the practical reasons for his switches of theory that the most serious opposition arose inside the Russian Communist Party. Indeed, some of the most fundamental departures both from orthodox theory and from party promises took place without arousing any serious opposition within the Communist Party at all.

Perhaps this ready acceptance by the Russian Communists of the need to subordinate theory to keeping in power is best illustrated by their attitude to that all important question, the state in a socialist society. It will be recalled that the Russian Social Democrats, alone of all European Marxists, had accepted as an item of their program the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Marx had used this phrase almost casually, on isolated occasions, to designate the temporary form which the struggle of the proletariat with its opponents would take immediately after its seizure of power. He had never defined or elaborated the shape which he thought a revolutionary government would assume in practice. But since in Marx's conception the proletarian revolution was to take place at a moment when the vast exploited majority finally rose against a small minority of exploiters, it was plain that this dictatorship would be temporary and shortlived. Moreover, since the seizure of power by the proletariat would inaugurate the advent of the classless society, and since the state existed only as a device for preventing class conflict from erupting into violence, it followed, in Marxist analysis, that the state must begin to wither away progressively from the moment that the proletariat had seized and consolidated its power.

On the very eve of the Bolshevik revolution Lenin still fully accepted this analysis. In his *State and Revolution*, written in August and September 1917 while he was in hiding—a work written with care and much thought, and a statement of principles to which he attached the utmost importance—Lenin fully accepted the classical Marxist analysis. "The proletarian state," he wrote, "will begin to wither away immediately after its victory, since in a society without class contradictions, the state is unnecessary and impossible". True, it would not, as the anarchists demanded, simply be abolished overnight. But neither, according to Lenin, would it resemble, while it lasted, the state which it had overthrown, with its police and other machinery of repression. Supported as it would be by the overwhelming mass of the population, it would enforce its will "almost without any special machinery."[1] These words, it should be emphasized, were not part of the demagogy with

*Published by G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., London, and by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1955.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia* (Works), 3rd edition, Vol. XXI, Moscow 1935–7, pp. 388, 431–2.

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which the Bolsheviks captured the support of the masses between March and November 1917, since *State and Revolution* was not published until the spring of 1918.

By the time Lenin's words were published, the first secret police organization (*Cheka*) had been active for several months, and not even the most sanguine Marxist could have discerned any signs of the state beginning to wither away. When the question of "withering away" came up in March 1918, at the Seventh Party Congress, Lenin now impatiently brushed it aside. "One may well wonder when the state will begin to wither away. . . . To proclaim this withering away in advance is to violate historical perspective." It was Bukharin, the Left Communist, who had raised the question. Many years passed before the question was raised again. The Left Communists, the Democratic Centralists, the Workers' Opposition—all accepted the need for the terror, the *Cheka*, the unbridled powers of the executive. The reason was not, perhaps, hard to find. The Bolsheviks, far from winning over the great majority of the country after they had seized power, as doctrine demanded, remained a small, unpopular minority, ruling by force. Their survival in sole power depended upon the state and the apparatus which they had created, and few Communists were prepared to question the necessity for this survival.

Thus, so far as one of the most fundamental departures from Marxist theory was concerned, the realities of power operated to dictate its acceptance, and without much discussion at that. The same proved to be the case with some other crucial questions of Marxist theory.

This failure of Russian Communists to analyze the theoretical implications of policy was understandable during the civil war, while the Soviet regime was engaged in a life and death struggle for survival. The common danger created unity, and discontent with such matters as over-centralization or interference in trade union affairs was assuaged by the faith that these were temporary if necessary evils, which would be put right when the danger had been averted. However, the blindness to questions of theory continued after the civil war, when it was not the Soviet state which was in peril from outside attack, but rather the Communist monopoly of power which was threatened from the inside. When in March 1921 the foundation of the future state structure was laid, it became apparent that no one within the Communist Party had grasped the theoretical issues which were at stake, perhaps not even Lenin. For what now took place was no less than a reversal in practice of the very basis of Marxist teaching—that the political machine is the mere reflection or superstructure of the economic form of society.

The *coup d'etat* of November 1917 had been accepted as a proletarian revolution, cutting short the democratic phase—that is, accepted as such by the Communists. The Mensheviks, who continued to believe that the October Revolution, in spite of appearances, was in essence a bourgeois, democratic revolution, nonetheless accepted its "historical necessity". And so long as war communism remained the official policy, the virtual one-party state which existed in the country after the peace of Brest-Litovsk might have appeared to many to be justified as the correct political superstructure for the putting into effect of extreme socialist policies.

But by the spring of 1921 war communism had failed. It was now to be replaced by an economic system in which there would be room for private capitalist enterprise and interests. Marxist logic therefore demanded that the political machine corresponding to such an economic system should be composed of parties representing the interests of the various classes which were now to be tolerated, in a state which was no longer regarded even in theory as a one-class state. Lenin himself had conceded this theoretical necessity in 1905, when he had argued that so long as the revolution had not emerged from the democratic, and therefore multi-class stage, government should take the form of a coalition dictatorship of the peasantry and the proletariat. Yet, in 1921 no serious opinion within the Communist Party was prepared to challenge its monopoly of all political power, though many Communists were ready to criticize the abuses which proceeded from the monopoly. In this respect the simple mutineers at Kronstadt, who demanded political freedom for all workers' and peasants' parties, may have proved themselves better Marxists than the Communists.

The question can be looked at from another aspect in which Marxist theory plays no part. Up to 1921 it was not difficult for the Communists to justify to themselves their decision to take, and keep, power alone. The socialists after all had failed to achieve, between March and November 1917, a solid and efficient government, and had then repudiated the Bolsheviks, who were at any rate prepared to take the responsibility for decisive action. The peace with Germany had been bitterly opposed by Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries alike. Was it not logical that the Communists should take upon themselves the burden of government alone? The Socialist Revo-

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lutionaries had for a time even sided with the anti-Bolshevik forces in the civil war.

But all these factors had ceased to exist in 1921. The socialist parties inside Russia, or those of them who still had an opportunity to voice their views, were vying with one another in their loyalty to the ideals of the revolution as such, although condemning the excesses of the Communists. There was not the remotest threat of any right-wing or counterrevolutionary restoration. Long after 1921, though deprived of all political power and though many of their number were in prison or exiled, the intelligentsia and the middle class continued to serve the Soviet state. The emigre socialists and *Kadety* even developed a whole philosophy of collaboration with the Communists in order to build up Russia, and many of them returned to implement what they considered to be their duty. There was opposition inside Russia, to be sure. But as the program of the Kronstadt insurgents, which was typical of this opposition, shows, it was opposition not to Soviet government but to the Communists' monopoly of power, and to their party's illegal methods of preserving it.

Those, and there are many,[2] who justify the Communists' elimination of their socialist opponents in 1921 by the necessity of safeguarding the "revolution" from its enemies ignore two essential facts:

First, enmity against the Communists was not enmity against the revolution, *i.e.*, the Soviet form of government, but against the methods of Communist rule in the name of that revolution. It was therefore not only an enmity of the Communists' own creation, but one which it was in their power to remove without danger to the revolution, though with undoubted risk to their own monopoly of power. To be sure, Lenin and the Communists identified "the revolution" with themselves. But it was an identification made by them alone, which did not correspond to facts.

Second, a great many, perhaps even the majority, of the conscious proletariat were in early 1921 Menshevik sympathizers. The revolutionary nature of this party's policy, which accorded political freedom to workers and peasants alone, and advocated large scale nationalization of industry and state control of foreign trade, cannot be conjured away, as is normally done by apologists of Lenin's policy, by describing it as "bourgeois". The socialists were not eliminated in 1921 because they were counterrevolutionary. They were described as counterrevolutionary in order to justify their elimination.

The socialists' criticism of Communist methods was echoed in much the same language by the malcontents inside the Communist Party. But different considerations applied to the intra-party Workers' Opposition. There was no vestige in their program of any quarrel with the Communist leaders for their treatment of socialist opponents or of the peasantry. They demanded freedom for themselves, but had no thought of conceding it to others. They accepted the state of affairs in which a party of a few hundred thousand could impose its will by force on millions of workers who did not support them. But they did not realize that if a minority party is to survive in sole power against the will of the great majority, it can only do so if it maintains the strictest discipline and control by its leaders over its own members.

If the Communist leaders were right in sensing in the Workers' Opposition a danger of a party split, they were wrong in attempting to identify the views of this opposition with menshevism. The Mensheviks believed that the revolution must be the work of the masses themselves. Lenin had replaced this view by the doctrine that, left to themselves, the masses will be content with palliative reforms, and must therefore be led on to revolution by a party of professional revolutionaries. The Mensheviks were concerned with the relations between the social democratic party and the proletariat as a whole or, in other words, with the nature and degree of leadership which the party of the proletariat should exercise over the proletariat. It was in this context that, in opposition to Lenin, they claimed a greater degree of initiative should be left to the workers themselves as distinct from the party which claimed to speak in their name.

Those in the Workers' Opposition were concerned with an entirely different question, the relation of the party at a low level to the party at a higher level.

[2] See, *e. g.* I. Deutscher, *Stalin, A Political Biography*, Oxford, 1949, p. 226: "It was true enough that concern for the revolution compelled Bolshevism to take the road chosen by the Tenth Congress. . . ." See also E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, 1917–1923, Vol. I., London, 1950, p. 183: "[The demise of the legal opposition] cannot fairly be laid at the door of one party. If it was true that the Bolshevik regime was not prepared after the first few months to tolerate an organized opposition, it was equally true that no opposition party was prepared to remain within legal limits. The premise of dictatorship was common to both sides of the argument." This judgment ignores not only the Mensheviks, but most of the Socialist Revolutionaries as well. The premise of dictatorship was certainly common to both sides in Lenin's "argument" with Denikin. But what relation to fact does such an assertion bear in the case of Martov and the Mensheviks, whose policy was founded upon the need to "remain within legal limits?" Or in the case of the Samara Socialist Revolutionaries, who gave up the fight for fear it might assist the victory of a right wing dictatorship? The charge that the Mensheviks were not prepared to "remain within legal limits" is part of the Bolsheviks' case; it does not survive an examination of the facts.

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They were not concerned with the workers outside that party, who formed the majority. It is true that in their demands for less restriction on the freedom of local party and trade union committees, for example, the Workers' Opposition may have appeared at times to be speaking the same language as the Mensheviks. But the Mensheviks wanted free elections in the trade unions, which would have put socialist, not Communist majorities into power. The Workers' Opposition did not seek to alter the rigged elections which ensured Communist majorities, but merely to safeguard the local trade union committee or cell from being replaced by central nominees.

The balance sheet of political support was not an encouraging one for the Communist Party in March 1921. Among the peasantry it had lost most, if not all, of the support or at least neutrality which had once played an important part in achieving victory both in November 1917 and in the civil war. Even among the proletariat dislike of the Communists had grown. With it grew the popularity of the socialist parties, notably of the Mensheviks. No Communist leader could have had any doubt, and some, such as Zinoviev, openly admitted that in any free election to any soviet or trade union committee in March 1921 the number of Communist candidates elected would have been small. It is true that much of this unpopularity was due to privations brought about by the civil war. But it is also true that much of it was due to the revolt of the Russian people against the unfairness, the violence, and the illegality with which the Communists suppressed all who did not accept their rule without question. The Kronstadt revolt proved this beyond any doubt.

In these circumstances there were only two policies open to Lenin: either to resign himself to his failure to win over the majority, to moderate the policy by which his monopoly of power had been secured and to accept the consequent loss of that monopoly; or to preserve his monopoly of political power at all costs, and at the same time make the task of preserving it easier by removing, at the price of sacrificing Communist doctrine, some of the economic causes of discontent. He chose the second course. But it was plain that this policy could only be successfully achieved by a disciplined party united, if necessary by force, for the difficult task which now confronted it.

Lenin easily steered his policy to victory at the Tenth Congress of the party in 1921. He was still the outstanding figure in the party, much as he had been in 1917. There was no rival leader within sight who could have succeeded in rallying the discontented inside the party around himself and in raising a revolt against Lenin. It was therefore easy for Lenin to carry the leaders of his party with him, in spite of the misgivings which some of them uttered and perhaps many more felt. It is plain that in 1921, as in 1917, many followed Lenin without completely realizing where he was leading them. The full significance of his policy may have been no more apparent at that time than had been the full significance of the seizure of power. In November 1917 a number of Bolshevik leaders raised objections when they discovered that what they had believed to be seizure of power by the Soviets was in reality seizure of power by the Bolshevik party. In 1921 those who followed Lenin believed that what was being achieved was the consolidation of the power of the Communist Party. Many of them were to rebel once again, in 1923, when they discovered that what had really taken place was the consolidation of power in the central party apparatus. But it was then too late.

Thus once again, in 1921 as in 1917, the personal qualities and influence of Lenin proved the decisive factor. In 1917 the political immaturity and inexperience of the Russian parties had played into the hands of anyone both resolute enough to seize power and untroubled by the doubts and hesitancies which beset the more scrupulous. After 1918 Lenin's democratic opponents had no armed forces at their disposal. Their sole hope of overthrowing the Communists might have been in alliance with the White Armies. The overwhelming majority of them had not been prepared to accept such an alliance for fear that the only outcome would be the downfall of the revolution and the restoration of the monarchy. The population, distracted by hardships of every kind, was able to achieve no more than a peasant guerrilla war and the Kronstadt revolt.

In 1921 the fate of the country lay in the hands of Lenin. He had a chance of burying past enmities and of carrying the vast majority of the country with him in an attempt to build up ruined Russia on the basis of cooperation and legal order, and not of the dictatorship of an unpopular minority. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that a greater man than Lenin would have seized this chance. But Lenin's genius lay in the technique of grasping and holding power. He was a great revolutionary, but not a statesman. His conviction that he and his followers alone held the secret of successful rule in their hands was, to a large extent, the product of the struggle by which he had achieved his position. But from his fateful

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decision in the spring of 1921 flowed all the consequences of the one party dictatorship which became apparent in the subsequent years of Soviet history.

Two main consequences derived from Lenin's political policy of 1921, both of enormous importance for the future history of Soviet Russia. The first was the emergence of what Engels has so well described as the "conventional hypocrisy." During the civil war there was at any rate some justification for the view that "he who is not with us is against us." In the heat of battle it was possible for the Communists to see in those socialists who were fighting against them enemies of the revolution, without seeming to do undue violence to truth. After 1921, the lumping together of Mensheviks, Workers' Opposition, serious theoretical critics and malcontents inside the Communist Party as counterrevolutionaries was a falsification, and everyone knew it. The acceptance of this official lie by almost the entire leadership of the Communist Party inevitably led to the result that whoever among them was strong enough to exploit it in his own interest had the rest of them at his mercy. What is the difference between the attempt by Lenin to expel Shliapnikov in 1921, and the expulsion of Trotsky six years later, if both can be justified by the same argument—that the stability of the dictatorship is the supreme law?

This, in turn, leads to the second main consequence of Lenin's policy. For, who has the power to decide by what faction the stability of the regime is to be best served? Clearly, he who manipulates the apparatus of the party, and can thereby ensure both the necessary majorities at the center and implicit obedience to central orders throughout the country. The malignant figure of the General Secretary, Stalin, has become only too familiar in its portrayal by disappointed oppositionists, defeated by the apparatus which he controlled. But it was Lenin, with their support, who equipped him with the weapons and started him upon his path.

Lenin's Counterrevolution

Leonard Schapiro:
The Origin of the Communist Autocracy: Political Opposition in the Soviet State, First Phase, 1917-1922,
Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1955, 350 pp.

Reviewed by Ronald Thompson

A FAVORITE pastime among those disillusioned by the "socialist experiment" in Soviet Russia during the 1930's and 1940's was the attempt to specify the particular moment in the Russian revolution when "things went wrong." One school, represented for example by the Trotskyites, set the decisive turn for the worse in the transition between the Leninist and Stalinist eras, with the implication that the latter had somehow "betrayed" the high promise of the former. Another school, more in harmony with the views of Alexander Kerensky, saw Lenin and the Bolsheviks as dominated by a lust for power from the first and dated their expulsion from the revolutionary Eden as originating with the seizure of power in October 1917.

Against both these schools there now stands this solid study of *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy* by Leonard Schapiro. On the one hand Mr. Schapiro declares that a "passion for justice" animated the early Bolshevik leaders and that "Lenin and his successors . . . . acted as they did, at any rate when they first set out, because they believed that in so doing they were serving the cause of justice." But on the other hand he considers that this feeling for justice was quickly and decisively corrupted by the actual impact of power already in the lifetime of Lenin:

The malignant figure of the General Secretary, Stalin, has become only too familiar in its portrayal by disappointed oppositionists defeated by the apparatus which he controlled. But it was Lenin, with their support, who equipped him with the weapons and started him upon his path.

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The origin of the Communist autocracy is therefore to be dated from some point in the first five years of Bolshevik rule—and in the course of 350 pages Mr. Schapiro marshals impressive evidence for the specific thesis that "in March 1921 the foundation of the future state structure was laid." From Lenin's "fateful decision in the spring of 1921," he says, "flowed all the consequences of the one-party dictatorship which became apparent in the subsequent years of Soviet history."

A bilinguist partly Russian in origin but British by upbringing and a lawyer by training, Mr. Schapiro gives a British lawyer's explanation of why the Bolsheviks were corrupted by power:

I take the view that their passion for justice was bound to lead to disaster when once they failed to see the need for reconciling all the conflicting interests which will always exist in practice in every state (whatever Marx and Engels may have said on the subject) . . . . Without the restraining *ne plus ultra* of law and independent judges it is very tempting for any government to sacrifice first the majority to the minority, then today to tomorrow, and finally one generation to future generations.

With the default of Lenin and his aides, the task of keeping the human passion for justice alive fell mainly to their radical opponents; it is with the fate and ultimate liquidation of these opponents as well as of the very right to opposition that the book is largely concerned.

The starting point of Mr. Schapiro's account is a declaration that "all those who figure in my narrative were revolutionaries." If this judgment includes the Bolsheviks, who are thereby absolved from being mere power-seekers, it also and in particular includes their party rivals, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, as well as their internal critics, the Workers' Opposition and other groups.[1] Indeed the principal shortcoming of many accounts of the Bolshevik revolution, according to Schapiro, is their concentration on the victorious Bolsheviks to the virtual exclusion both of other parties within the revolutionary movement and of opposition trends within the Communist Party. Even critical accounts, he feels, have too easily followed a Marxist line of thinking in this respect, since "those who accept the Marxist doctrine as true tend to dismiss the elimination of the Bolsheviks' political opponents as an inevitable step in the victory of the party of the proletariat, and not therefore of outstanding interest." Although Schapiro is careful to avoid a polemical approach, he discreetly suggests that the leading sinner in this respect today is his fellow Britisher, E. H. Carr.[2]

It was the non-Bolshevik revolutionists who represented the clear majority of the Russian people in 1917, and if anything, they would probably have gained greater support in 1921. The suppression of this revolutionary majority constitutes for Schapiro the very process by which the Communist autocracy was instituted. This and not Bolshevik playing at constitution-making is for him the real explanation of the origin of the totalitarian Soviet state. Nor does he accept Carr's assertion that in Lenin's suppression of his opponents "the premise of dictatorship was common to both sides of the argument." Dictatorship, he holds, is the technique whereby a minority rules over the majority, not vice versa, as Marxist terminology would have it.

The promise of dictatorship was certainly common to both sides in Lenin's "argument" with [the White general] Denikin. But what relation to fact does such an assertion bear in the case of Martov and the Mensheviks, whose policy was founded upon the need to "remain within legal limits?" Or in the case of the Samara Socialist Revolutionaries who [in late 1918] gave up the fight for fear it might assist the victory of a right-wing dictatorship? The charge that the Mensheviks were not prepared to remain within legal limits is part of the Bolsheviks' case; it does not survive an examination of the facts.

Lenin's suppression of the revolutionary majority took place in two stages—a preliminary, emergency stage in the first few months of power, and a final, decisive stage in the winter of 1920–21. Schapiro on the whole deals rather briefly with the tumultuous interval from the overthrow of the old Tsarist autocracy in February 1917 to the partial establishment of the new Communist autocracy on the basis of "war communism" in the summer of 1918. This is ground that has been covered before; and in any case the struggle was not yet conclusive. The civil war between Red and White dictatorships was just beginning; the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, though outlawed by the Bolsheviks in June 1918, maintained a partly legal, partly illegal existence as long as the civil war lasted; and inside the Communist

[1] Originally the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks were opposing factions representing respectively the moderate and radical wings of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. Although from 1903–18 they coexisted within the party, their divergent policies and programs precluded any real collaboration. In 1918 the Bolsheviks formally constituted themselves as the Communist Party. The Mensheviks continued to oppose the Bolshevik dictatorship and to demand a government composed of all shades of socialist opinion.

The Socialist Revolutionary Party drew its recruits from the ranks of the peasantry and advocated a type of agrarian socialism for Russia based on the *mir*, or village commune.

The factional demands of the Workers' Opposition are dealt with later in the article.

[2] See, *e. g.*, Carr's *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vols. I–IV, Oxford University Press, London and New York, 1950–54.

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Party, though Bukharin's Left Communist opposition had quickly collapsed, the principle of internal opposition was not as yet questioned.[3] Lenin's political struggle with his revolutionary rivals was left in abeyance pending victory on the military front.

During the next two years of civil war (from the summer of 1918 to the autumn of 1920) the area of Communist control was the scene of mounting tensions. Non-Bolshevik radicals were active, despite all restrictions: the Mensheviks actually regained a good part of the proletarian following which they had lost to the Bolsheviks in 1917, and the Socialist Revolutionaries confidently looked forward to new supports as a result of the peasant unrest they knew would accompany the end of the fighting. Popular discontent also was finding channels of expression within the party and government apparatus itself. Thus the trade union leadership, though largely a Bolshevik monopoly, was nevertheless so jealous of its functional independence as to present the example of responsible Communists resisting the disciplinary efforts of their own party center. The Red Army too was an arena in which centralized party control was opposed by the very watchdogs of military loyalty, the Communist commanders at the lower levels who resisted Trotsky's high-handed orders from above. Within the Communist Party itself there was so much criticism of the leadership's increasing interference in the work of lower members and organs that Krestinsky and his two associates in the party Secretariat had their hands full trying to placate the membership.

The defeat of General Wrangel's White Army in the Crimea in November 1920, virtually terminating the civil war, released these hidden pressures and inaugurated a four months' crisis. Out of the crisis there emerged in classical outline the permanent dilemma confronting Communist power: whether to conform to the principles of revolutionary democracy which the Bolsheviks themselves had advocated in 1917 but had since steadily repudiated under the plea of wartime emergency; or to make this repudiation permanent by consolidating in still more decisive fashion the autocratic power of the minority over the majority.

Characteristically enough, the opening move in the crisis, the first threat to the new *status quo*, occurred at the very summit of the party-state pyramid—the Central Committee itself—from whence it was to spread in ever widening and deepening layers to embrace the whole of Soviet society. For in the same month of November which saw his wartime activities approaching an end, Trotsky, the irrepressible No. 2 man in the party hierarchy, acting on an assignment in the trade union field, proceeded to threaten the obstinate trade union bureaucrats with a thorough shake-up along the lines he had already applied in the Red Army. Not only did the trade union officials, with Tomsky at their head, run protestingly to Lenin, but Zinoviev, the probable No. 3 man in the party at that time, saw in the situation an ideal opportunity to indulge his own bitter jealousy of Trotsky by embarking on a thinly-veiled public campaign against him. Lenin in this emergency unhesitatingly and repeatedly backed Zinoviev and Tomsky against the more brilliant and therefore more dangerous Trotsky, partly because Trotsky's alienation of the trade unionists was scarcely opportune at the moment, but also no doubt because Trotsky's ambition at this point became, or seemed to become, a challenge to Lenin's own leadership.

From the top men in the party the case of jitters rapidly spread to the whole central leadership and beyond. Zinoviev, in particular, pressed his demagogic efforts not only among the opponents of Trotsky in the labor and military fields but also among the opponents of the party Secretariat in the ranks of the party. As a result Krestinsky and his fellow Secretaries were driven into the Trotsky camp, but down in the ranks many a long-suffering party man now found a chance to let off steam and even to back one leadership clique against another. Bukharin, sensing the danger of a split, essayed the role of peacemaker between Lenin and Trotsky, but was so sharply rebuked by Lenin for interfering as to land by default also in the Trotsky camp. Stalin, more Machiavellian than the rest, posed as a practical man above the factions, correctly voted with Lenin on all occasions, privately encouraged Zinoviev in his anti-Trotsky campaign, and kept his eye on the key positions that might be expected to fall vacant when the smoke of battle cleared.

Meanwhile the factional green light given to the party ranks produced trends which progressed from simple support for one leader against another to a more ambitious criticism of leadership policy as a whole. Most notable was the Workers' Opposition group, made up of proletarian Bolsheviks such as Shliapnikov, who favored election of all officials from below (rather than appointment from above) and advocated a syndicalist program of trade union control of industry (rather than state control as taken for granted by both Lenin and Trotsky). When Shliap-

[3] Bukharin's "Left Communist" group was a small faction of the Bolshevik Party. In 1918 it opposed Lenin's demand for a separate peace with Germany and advocated fighting a "revolutionary war" which, in its view, would spark other revolts in Western Europe.

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nikov's pedestrian criticism was supplemented by the more impassioned appeals of Alexandra Kollontai (another leader in the movement), the Workers' Opposition became so serious a threat to the party leadership as a whole that it brought about the truce within the Central Committee which Bukharin had been unable to effect. Even before the convening of the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party in March 1921, the leadership had closed its own ranks in order to present a united front against dissension from below.

But if the Workers' Opposition inside the Communist Party represented a layer both broader than and critical of the Central Committee, the Menshevik opposition, outside the charmed Communist circle altogether, represented a stratum still larger than the Workers' Opposition as well as more fundamental in its criticism. Schapiro thinks that in the winter of 1920–1921 the Mensheviks had the support of the majority of genuine proletarians in Russia; in any case, although they were excluded from the political and in great part from the trade union life of the country, they succeeded in the last week of February 1921 in unleashing a mass strike in Petrograd which virtually brought industry to a standstill. At the same time, the peasant uprising so long awaited by the Socialist Revolutionaries already had taken over a large part of the province of Tambov and was beginning to spread to other areas.

The threatening avalanche away from Bolshevik power seemed finally launched by the mutiny of the Baltic Fleet at Kronstadt on March 1, 1921. Denouncing the one-party dictatorship and the restrictions of "war communism", the sailors called for a return to the goals of 1917. In a manifesto which represents the nearest thing to an expression of free public opinion in that period, the Kronstadt sailors who had been a bulwark of the October revolution now in effect accused the Bolsheviks of having betrayed the cause.

Faced with a thorough-going threat to their power—and this now, as henceforth, from a revolutionary direction—Lenin and his aides executed a *coup* of great daring and decisiveness. Lenin himself, prepared to yield his "socialist" economy in order to save his political power, took the occasion of the Tenth Party Congress to reverse the war communism of the previous three years and inaugurate instead his New Economic Policy of temporary concessions to the peasants. Trotsky, who had now capitulated completely to Lenin, was given the key task of suppressing the Kronstadt rebellion, a task which he executed with difficulty but nevertheless with dispatch. Zinoviev meanwhile rounded up and smashed the Menshevik organization in Petrograd, thus initiating a police terror which in a year's time finally and permanently rooted out the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary parties as significant forces in the life of the country.

"The socialists", says Schapiro, "were not eliminated in 1921 because they were counterrevolutionary; they were described as counterrevolutionary in order to justify their elimination." Lenin had simply resorted to a carrot and club policy in which the carrot was confined to the sphere of economics and the club was the only rule in politics. The NEP concessions were designed not as the complement but as the alternative to political concessions, their inauguration being timed to coincide with the final and decisive consolidation of the Communist autocracy. This tightening of the screw applied not only the non-Bolshevik parties but to the non-Leninist factions within the Bolshevik party which were now slated for elimination.

As Schapiro makes clear, the moral case for the Workers' Opposition was not very strong:

They demanded freedom for themselves but had no thought of conceding it to others. . . . They accepted the state of affairs in which a party of a few hundred thousand could impose its will by force on millions of workers who did not support them. But they did not realize that if a minority party is to survive in sole power against the will of the great majority, it can only do so if it maintains the strictest discipline and control by its leaders over its own members.

In the face of the anti-party Kronstadt revolt, the Workers' Opposition had no recourse but to swallow their own disagreements with Lenin and to accept whatever he might mete out to them. Lenin for his part was determined to dissolve them and to utilize the crisis, as he said, to "put the lid on the opposition." Thus with characteristic indirection he first had the Tenth Congress adopt a glowing resolution on "workers' democracy," and then in a surprise move on the last day he rushed through two contradictory resolutions condemning "anarcho-syndicalism" and party "factionalism" and empowering the Central Committee to stamp them out. Shliapnikov was included against his will in the new Central Committee chosen by the Congress, but his position was that of a hostage for the good behavior of his adherents, and the iron administrative controls now exercised by the party soon eliminated all vestiges of the group.

Lenin's autocratic triumph did not stop there. For just as the party rank-and-file was held captive by the leaders because of the anti-party revolt, so the re-

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maining party leaders were held captive by Lenin because of the pressure from the ranks. Each category had its privileges to defend against a lower category, and in order to do so had to fall back helplessly on the good will of those still higher up. The disintegrating process which had spread the crisis of 1920–21 from the top leaders down to the masses was now reversed by an integrating process leading from the masses back up to Lenin.

Thus in the appointment to leading posts at the Tenth Congress, Zinoviev received his reward by replacing Bukharin on the five-man Politburo (along with Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and Kamenev). Trotsky was not directly punished, but of the six Central Committee members who had most actively supported him in the original dispute, four (including Krestinsky and the other two party secretaries) were now dropped from the Central Committee, leaving Trotsky unable ever again to act with such brash self-confidence as he had done in 1920. On the other hand nine new members of the Central Committee (not including Shliapnikov) were chosen, all of whom enjoyed to a greater or lesser extent close fraternal relations with Joseph Stalin. These nine fairly swamped the Central Committee, which now had a total membership of 25, and three of them, headed by Molotov, were appointed party secretaries in place of the three who had been dropped. Indeed, the 30-year-old Molotov became the key link in the new administrative set-up since at the Tenth Congress he was appointed (a) a member of the Central Committee, (b) an alternate member of the Politburo, (c) a member of the Orgburo, and (d) the first "responsible" secretary of the Central Committee.

The real victor at the Tenth Congress in March 1921 was, of course, not Molotov but Stalin, since Molotov was simply Stalin's agent. Stalin was already a member of both the Politburo and the Orgburo, but in each of these bodies he had been in a minority position. Now, with the aid of Molotov and cohorts, he gained full control of the Orgburo and the Secretariat, plus weighty representation in the Central Committee as a whole and one vote out of five in the Politburo. Since the Orgburo and the Secretariat together were in charge of the inner party apparatus and machinery of appointments, Stalin at this point presumably replaced Zinoviev as No. 3 man in the party. And when Stalin took over the new post of General Secretary of the party at the next congress in 1922, his *de facto* authority must finally have exceeded Trotsky's.

Thus, as Schapiro points out, the direct result of Lenin's subordination of everyone else to his own personal dictates in March 1921 was to smooth the way for Stalin's complete triumph once Lenin himself became ill, as happened in May 1922. From any point of view it was a sorry load that Lenin bequeathed to posterity, and Schapiro does not spare him, as the following judgment shows:

In 1921 the fate of the country lay in the hands of Lenin. He had a chance of burying past enmities and of carrying the vast majority of the country with him in an attempt to build up ruined Russia on the basis of cooperation and legal order, and not of the dictatorship of an unpopular minority. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that a greater man than Lenin would have seized this chance. But Lenin's genius lay in the technique of grasping and holding power. He was a great revolutionary, but not a statesman.

Perhaps one modification should be made here. Lenin was a great revolutionary more precisely in the sense of grasping and holding power than in the sense of representing the forces of revolutionary democracy. When power clashed with the revolutionary democracy, as it did in March 1921, Lenin chose power. In choosing power and thus consolidating the Communist autocracy, Lenin pursued not really a revolutionary but a counterrevolutionary path. March 1921 was the point, perhaps more than any other, at which "things went wrong" with the Soviet regime. It was Lenin's counterrevolution.

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Marxism and Communism — Theory vs. Practice

John Plamenatz:
German Marxism and Russian Communism,
Longmans, Green & Co.,
London, New York, Toronto, 1954, 356 pp.

R. N. Carew Hunt:
Marxism Past and Present
Macmillan, New York; G. Bles, London; 1954, 180 pp.

Alfred G. Meyer:
Marxism; The Unity of Theory and Practice,
Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1954, 181 pp.
(Russian Research Center Series, No. 14)

Reviewed by Robert V. Daniels

ONE of the main tasks of a dispassionate discussion of Communist theory should be to dispel the widespread illusion that socialism, communism, and Marxism are for all practical purposes identical. A distinctive effort in this direction is the recent book, *German Marxism and Russian Communism*, by the British political scientist John Plamenatz, Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford. To his initial aim of describing the transformation of Marxism at the hands of the Bolsheviks, Mr. Plamenatz explains, he was forced to add a reassessment of the meaning of Marxism itself (the latter aim occupies the first and more substantial half of the book). Despite, or perhaps because of, decades of polemical, exegetical, expository and denunciatory writing about it, the subject of Marxism remains as complicated and obscure as ever. Plamenatz makes progress, though he has not entirely put an end to the confusion.

The volume is of prime value for the thesis around which it is centered—the fundamental doctrinal transformation intervening between Marxism and Lenin's bolshevism. The idea is hardly new and Plamenatz seems to underestimate the extent of present awareness of it, but rediscoveries are always of value in furthering the wider understanding of a crucial problem. While Plamenatz's work is neither as systematic nor as comprehensive as might be wished, and leaves something to be desired respecting clarity of argument (not to mention its lack of bibliography and adequate footnoting), it contains a variety of fresh insights and a notable evaluation: Marxism is, though fallacious, of great interest as a contribution to the development of social thought; Russian communism is not even of interest.

What Marxism suffers from, in Plamenatz's view, is above all an agonizing vagueness. This is particularly the case with what is presumed to be the core of the theory—the doctrine of historical materialism—which, Plamenatz argues, breaks down hopelessly when a real attempt is made to infuse concrete meaning into it. He rejects as unsubstantiated the basic proposition that the "forces of production" (technology) through the "relations of production" (*i.e.*, the division of labor) which they call into being, determine the system of property and the structure of society. Where he finds it possible to apply the Marxian historical scheme of class struggles, it appears that political forces and ideas are the decisive factors. Marx and Engels themselves, he observed, often failed in their more concrete writings to follow the dictates of their own deterministic system.

This clear-cut picture of theoretical weakness and inconsistency has been drawn before.[1] The technique has been to take one of Marx's thoroughly deterministic formulations of his philosophy, such as that in the preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*, hold this to be the essence of Marxism, and then berate Marx simultaneously for the one-sidedness of his theory and his inconsistency in applying it. Success in this undertaking is too complete; one is led to suspect that devotion to the objective of picking Marxism to pieces is likely to yield neither a full appreciation of the theory nor an explanation of the great direct and indirect influence which it has had.

Plamenatz, on the contrary, giving Marxism perhaps even more credit than is due, remarks at one point that it "still remains, even in the West, the most important of all systematic social and political theories" (p. 306). No one who really has acquainted himself with the work of Marx can fail to feel a certain awe at the tremendous scope and moral fervor manifested by the system of theories he constructed—even if it was fallacious. In the perspective of intel-

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[1] See, for example, Karl Federn, *The Materialist Conception of History: A Critical Analysis*, London, Macmillan, 1939.

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lectual history one might go so far as to describe Marxism as the *Summa Theologica* of the nineteenth century. Most of the basic thought-modes of the mid-nineteenth century are in Marxism combined into one vast synthesis—the nascent interest in studying society, the vogue of science (yielding a pseudo-science of society), philosophical materialism combined with an intense ethical idealism (a relationship which many present writers seem not to appreciate), the new awareness of economics engendered by the industrial revolution, the developmental or evolutionary approach to the phenomena of the entire universe, the faith in progress and the aspiration for a new order of social justice. In view of the impressiveness of the Marxian scheme, there is little ground for wonder at the extent of the intellectual appeal which it has had at various times during the last century.

More satisfying as a systematic exposition of the content of Marxism is the work of the British foreign affairs specialist, R. N. Carew Hunt. Mr. Hunt, well known to students of Soviet affairs for his lucid and detached *Theory and Practice of Communism*, a historical introduction to the doctrine, recently published a new volume which attempts a deeper investigation, within a topical frame of reference, of Marxism as a social and political theory. This work, *Marxism Past and Present*, is of particular value in setting forth the problems faced (and compounded) by Marx and the Marxists in defining and developing their specific sociological and political concepts, particularly the conception of base and superstructure and the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[2]

Hunt concedes rather more validity to Marxism than does Plamenatz, particularly where it drew attention to neglected economic and social factors in history. On the other hand, Hunt finds Marxism more accountable for the sins committed in its name; he indicates that he has turned further in this direction since the writing of his earlier book. While he deals repeatedly with some of the most recent Soviet pronouncements (through 1952), he has not tried in the new volume to present an integrated picture of the course of doctrinal revision under Stalin. He is, of course, quite aware of the manifold differences between Marx's theories and Stalin's interpretation of them.

The thesis implied in Hunt's work suggests that there is nonetheless a profound link between the theorist and the practitioner—a link apparently deriving not from the notion of historical materialism, which between them Lenin and Stalin butchered, but from the faith common to Marx and the Communists as revolutionary millenarians. The true radical might be defined as a person convinced that the *system* must go, that no real improvement can be made until it does go, that any means can and must be employed to destroy it, and that the forces of nature in the new system will ensure against any evil after-effects either of the old order or of the means used by the revolutionaries to overthrow it. History has shown that the results of this "system" fallacy, if successfully applied, can be at least as bad as the original evil. To complete the picture, however, one ought to investigate the influence of Russian history, particularly the sweeping radicalism of the Russian revolutionary tradition, as a factor shaping the Bolshevik movement and profoundly affecting the development of the Soviet regime. Why was it, after all, that revolutionary Marxism (or a movement professing it) succeeded in Russia while it decayed in Western Europe, if not because of particularly Russian circumstances?

An effort to probe deeper into the essential nature of Marxism and to find there an explanation for both the appeal and the decay of the doctrine is contained in the brief but highly original and provocative study of Marxism recently completed by Alfred G. Meyer, under the title *Marxism—The Unity of Theory and Practice*. Mr. Meyer, formerly a Research Fellow of the Russian Research Center at Harvard (under whose auspices the present work appears) and currently associated with the Research Project on the History of the CPSU at Columbia University, undertakes to investigate not so much the specific doctrinal and theoretical pronouncements of Marx and Engels as he does to inquire into the basic method of thought and underlying assumptions involved in Marxism. In the course of his analysis he arrives at definite conclusions regarding the nature of Marxism, the reasons for its disintegration as a vital intellectual movement, and the significance of the Marxian method in relation to general problems of modern social science. Part I of the essay discusses the three primary elements in which Meyer analyzes Marxist thought—science,

[2] The Marxian concept concerning base and superstructure can be explained in brief as follows: Marx believed that the "economic base" of society—that is the nature of "forces of production" (or technology) and "the relations of production" (or division of labor)—determine everything else in the society, collectively termed the "superstructure"—that is, its political and social ideas and institutions, its government, its culture, *etc.*

The doctrine of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" held that in the final revolutionary triumph of the working class over the bourgeoisie, the former would for a time have to establish a dictatorship over the rest of the society. Marx believed the revolution would come about when the overwhelming majority of a society was forced into the proletarian class as a result of a capitalist exploitation. He expected that as soon as the minority "capitalist opposition" was wiped out and a socialist society established, the state, or "dictatorship," would "wither away."

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radicalism, and faith in progress; Part II concerns the break-down of Marxism when the "unity of theory and practice" is disrupted.

The contrast in the approaches of Meyer and Plamenatz is no better illustrated than by their treatments of that perennial bugbear, the dialectic.[3] Plamenatz simply dismisses it as extraneous to the real matter. In Meyer's study, on the other hand, the dialectic and its meaning are considered central in getting at the significance of Marxism: "Marxist dialectics can . . . be defined . . . as the most abstract description of how phenomena in the real world are related to each other . . ., an odd and clumsy way of describing a functional relationship" (p. 33).

The functional approach (wherein Meyer follows the eminent American sociologist Talcott Parsons) presumes society to be a "total system as a going concern", in which all elements are interdependent and functionally related to the fortunes of the whole. Just such a conception of the social system is discerned by Meyer in the dialectical materialism of Marx. (Plamenatz sees it too, in fact, though he is repelled by the idea.) Meyer holds that the essence of Marxism is not historical materialism or economic determinism, but a concept of interrelationship between the economic, social, political, and intellectual aspects of society (p. 17). Moreover, despite the emphasis put by Marx and Engels on the economic factor, they do not appear to be technological determinists: ". . . the crucial feature around which their whole theory is constructed is the *class structure* of a given society, not its technology" (p. 18). Meyer and Plamenatz are in agreement on the decisiveness of social and political relationships that the study of Marxism suggests; they differ only over whether Marx meant to give such an impression.

Hunt stresses the confusion in Marxism where it fails (even in the concept of production) to distinguish material and "superstructural" elements. But Meyer suggests that Marx was attempting precisely the opposite of what most of his critics berate him for failing to do in this connection: *i.e.*, he was trying, in language crude and misleading, to attack notions of the *separateness* of the different orders of social phenomena, to show the intimate intermingling in all aspects of life of all kinds of influences—material, social and individual (with corrective emphasis, of course, on the first of these). If this was not Marx's intent, at the least it is a useful idea which Meyer has arrived at through the study of Marx. Marx's contribution to the study of society, after all, lies in his dicta about what to look for rather than in the particular relationships that he thought he saw.

While the sociological system developed by Marx remains of interest and in part of value, Marxism as a distinctive body of beliefs was apparently doomed by its very nature to break down; it contained, so to speak, the seeds of its own destruction. For Meyer, the essence of Marxism is the combination of three states of mind—scientific analysis, radical criticism, and optimistic faith in progress. All these must support each other; "the basic unity of this entire system lies in the conviction that they do so" (pp. 103–104). As phrased alternatively, Marxism hinges on a tie between scientific analysis and revolutionary purpose, resulting, as Max Eastman has put it, in the "animism" that ensues from the effort to convince oneself that one's moral preferences are guaranteed by the inevitable working of natural laws.[4]

I would suggest that this problem be approached from the standpoint of two related dichotomies, *i. e.*, with the recognition that two sorts of duality are involved in Marxist thought. One, the more familiar, is the duality of theory and practice, of science and revolution. It is the consequence of trying to combine these contrasting elements into a monistic system of thought that has particularly attracted the critical attention of Eastman and Meyer. The other duality, paralleling the first somewhat, is *within* the theory; it arises from the opposing philosophical orientations of determinism (stressing the "objective" decisiveness of material conditions and natural laws in history) and of voluntarism (recognizing that men—or certain men—can make their own history).

This latter duality has long been insufficiently appreciated; Marxism has usually been understood, even by the most Marxists, as purely deterministic. It so happened, however, that in the course of the doctrinal manipulations initiated in the Soviet Union after 1929 when Stalin acquired unchallenged leadership, a reassessment of Marxism was made and its conclusions enjoined upon the faithful. The new line, founded on writings and ideas of Marx and Engels unknown or neglected while the preceding "mechanist" fashion prevailed among Marxists, involved a rediscovery of the voluntaristic aspect of Marxist theory and an

[3] According to Marx, the dialectic, a principle of change consisting of three stages—thesis (or affirmation), antithesis (negation), and synthesis (unification)—has been the prime mover of history. Thus he envisioned the "classless society" as the inevitable "synthesis" of the struggle between bourgois society ("thesis") and the proletariat ("antithesis").

[4] Max Eastman, *Marxism, Is It Science?*, New York, Norton, 1940, pp. 61–63 and *passim*.

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exaggerated shift away from determinism toward the new interpretation. That is why recognition of this aspect of Marxism by Western scholars stems principally from studies concerned with Soviet ideology in the 1930's.[5]

The most original and at the same time most abstruse aspect of Meyer's work lies in his effort to comprehend the second or philosophical dualism in Marxism. Where Plamenatz, for instance, sees only inconsistency, Meyer discerns an effort to bring both determining conditions and willful human action, both natural laws and human purposes, into a single system of social explanation, where simultaneously history makes man and man makes history.

The great defect in this system was the attempt to reconcile the theory-practice duality as well, by insistence on the concurrence of scientific analysis and revolutionary program. The moment the facts cast doubt on the imminence of the revolutionary goal, Marx's system went to pieces, and his effort at a philosophical reconciliation of natural law and human will was lost in the confusion over revolutionary tactics. There was, however, a reason for maintaining the awkward postulate of the unity of theory and practice. I would explain it thus: Marxism as a social theory is designed to explain human behavior. Consistently applied, the theory would extend to the revolutionary belief and activity of the Marxists themselves, interpreted not as men logically convinced, but as the subjects of unconscious socio-economic conditioning. The nature of Marxism in the minds of its believers thus would be reduced to "ideology" in Marx's sense of an irrational belief justifying class interests (just as in the case of any other class). But this relativism is unacceptable. Marxism is supposed to represent the final, correct insight into the workings of society; as science, it claims absolute, supra-class validity. A solution of sorts is found in the argument that the particular socio-economic conditioning which the proletariat experiences is such as to make it espouse *the* ideology which, alone of all "ideologies," enjoys absolute validity. As Meyer expresses this implication, ". . . irrational class interest has merged with true reason in the socialist movement" (p. 100). Marxian theory demands the proletarian movement; the proletarian movement presumably demands Marxian theory.

Though Meyer is both nimble and lucid in this world of abstractions, it may prove difficult for his reader to grasp such a proposition, which attempts to eliminate all difference between the actual and the ideal, between the possible and the desirable. Herein, however, lies the most far-reaching and disquieting of Meyer's observations. In the tribulations of Marxism he finds evidence of a problem fundamental to Western civilization:

> **. . . the theory of Marx was, perhaps, the last attempt to combine absolute, radical, grandiose humanistic ideals with the most hardheaded and coldblooded realism. Both this idealism and this realism are part of our intellectual tradition. In its abortive attempt to drive both strands to their logical conclusion and then combine them in a grand synthesis, Marxism has thrown a light on the shaky foundations of this tradition and thus compels us to explore the frontiers of our philosophy (p. 149).**

LENINISM was a response to Russian conditions which made Marxism as Meyer defines it untenable. The Marxian analysis, when applied to Russia, yielded not the prospect of imminent proletarian revolution but the expectation of a long period of capitalism; the unity of deterministic theory and revolutionary practice was ruptured. With it the Russian Marxist movement itself was split between the "patient" Mensheviks, as Plamenatz terms them, and the "impatient" Bolsheviks. The "patient" Marxists respected the sociological analysis, sacrificed purposive efforts, and rationalized this by a deterministic reading of the theory. The "impatient" Marxists, particularly among the Russians influenced by their native revolutionary tradition, were devoted to revolutionary action virtually as an end in itself. Emotionally, as Plamenatz points out, Lenin was the real heir of Marx.

Lenin's outstanding doctrinal innovation was his concept of the party, not at all what its western etymology implies, but a paramilitary conspiratorial organization of professional revolutionaries, tightly disciplined and ideologically purified. Implied in Lenin's politics and the argument which he used to justify them was a conception of the historical process which seems to this reviewer basically at variance with Marxism however interpreted. The man who could say, "Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is . . ., from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers,"[6] was not a Marxist (whether he was right or not) but more like a Russian Populist—notwithstanding his denunciation of the latter people. In spite of his unshakable belief in his own Marxist orthodoxy, Lenin's implicit philosophy of history

[5] See, for example, Raymond Bauer, *The New Man in Soviet Psychology*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1952, esp. Ch. 2.

[6] Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?," in *Selected Works*, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1950, Vol. I, Part 1, p. 287. Italics in the original.

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was really only a variant of the Populist, or *narodnik*, doctrine of the decisive role of "critically minded individuals" (*i.e.*, the Russian radical intelligentsia) in the progress of human society. Lenin merely shifted from the peasantry to the workers (and even so not completely) for the mass whom his revolutionaries would lead into the new order.

Bolshevism is a political theory of history, not an economic one. Lenin, declining to wait for the economic laws of history to unfold, rationalized his determination to attempt a direct seizure of power when the time appeared ripe. It is noteworthy that historical materialism was the basis for the misgivings in his own Bolshevik party at the time of the October Revolution—the fear expressed by Zinoviev and Kamenev that the condition of the country would doom the Bolshevik cause to failure. Lenin's real philosophy was never stated as such but only implied in his tactical precepts and in his political actions. Above all, it was revealed in the action of seizing power at the head of an energetic minority in disregard of the level of social development in Russia, and in thenceforth using governmental force to "build socialism"—*i.e.*, to create the industrial establishment which was presumably a necessary condition for the proletarian revolution in the first place. For a translation of Lenin's implicit politicalism into explicit doctrine, however, the Communist movement had to wait for Stalin.

The second phase of doctrinal transformation in Russian Marxism, encompassed in the Stalinist revolution of 1929–36, is less widely understood than the development of Leninism in the early 1900's. Plamenatz in his appraisal of bolshevism stops, oddly enough, just short of the more recent changes. Meyer, while not directly concerned with bolshevism, does put Marxism in such a light as to make the Stalinist shift somewhat more intelligible, but the main problems in understanding Soviet ideology since the 1930's are largely foreign to his context.

Beginning in 1929, on the basis of the reappraisal of the foundations of Marxism already referred to, the Soviet government at Stalin's direction ordered the wholesale renunciation of determinist precepts in favor of voluntarism. This revision was not undertaken in the interest of correctly interpreting Marxism, but for ulterior political purposes. Exaggerations and extremes were indulged in which destroyed all real affinity with the initial Marxian philosophy however interpreted, deterministically or functionally. Stalin himself set the tone: "there can be no justification for references to so-called objective conditions." He preferred to be able to fix the blame for his government's troubles on the political sins of individual scapegoats.[7] The recasting of historical materialism and of the Marxian theory of the state are familiar enough not to require elaboration here. Governments, leaders, and nations became and have remained, in the official Soviet view, the real stuff of history. The state rather emphatically failed to wither away; the concept withered instead.

The ultimate in the Soviet reinterpretation of Marx came in 1950, in the unlikely context of the linguistics controversy of that year. After asserting that Marx had not necessarily said the last word for all times and places (and thus inadvertently undercutting the doctrinal foundation of the Soviet regime's claim to represent the ultimate in human progress), Stalin capped the now well-established voluntarist reading of historical materialism with a curious twist which reflected his own bent toward concrete and personified thinking. "The superstructure is generated by the base," he conceded, but:

. . . this does not at all mean that it only reflects the base, that it is passive, neutral, indifferent to the fate of its base, to the fate of classes, to the character of the social order. On the contrary, having made its appearance, it becomes the greatest active force, it actively helps its base to take shape and become stronger, and it takes every measure to help the new order to overthrow the old base and the old classes and liquidate them.[8]

Stalin, apparently unable to conceive of developments within the analytical categories of an abstract scheme, has presented us with a view of history as the product of a competition *between* the somehow personified entities of base and superstructure. He has, moreover, indicated a rejection of economic determinism which is surprisingly close to the evaluations of both Meyer and Plamenatz. But the Marxian baby—the subtle perception of functional interrelations in society—has gone down the drain with the bath.

More significant are the aspects of the Stalinist ideological shift which come to light when one examines the regime's objectives in so refashioning its doctrinal trappings. Two kinds of important changes may be considered—an alteration in the spirit in which doctrine is propounded, and a shift in the function of doctrine.

The change in the function of ideology is, briefly, from the role of guiding and inspiring the regime to that of rationalizing its actions and controlling publicly expressed thought. Marxist theory has, through

[7] Stalin, "Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the CPSU (B) (1934)," *Problems of Leninism*, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1940, p. 529.

[8] Stalin, "Marksizm i voprosy iazykoznania" (Marxism and Problems of Linguistics), Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1951, p. 7.

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reinterpreting to fit successive political needs, become entirely subordinated to practice, and has lost any appreciable long-run guiding or inhibiting effect on the policies of the government.

Accompanying this shift in the role of theory there has been a marked change in the manner in which it is professed: ideology has assumed the attributes of dogma. Lenin himself was responsible for the foundations of his successors' dogmatic literalism:

You cannot eliminate even one basic assumption, one substantial part of this philosophy of Marxism (it is as if it were a solid block of steel) without abandoning objective truth, without falling into the arms of the bourgeois-reactionary falsehood.[9]

The Stalinist system of thought, if it can be dignified by the term, has served the regime well as a means of expressing and justifying its changing values and policies and maintaining conformity to the latter, or at least stifling dissidence. Once established as a control device, the new system of doctrine proved fully capable of absorbing the most drastic changes of theoretical content, ranging from the repudiation of equalitarianism as "reactionary petty-bourgeois absurdity," to the rejection of modern art as "bourgeois formalism." The pattern of a fundamental shift to an authoritarian conservatism is easy to discern.[10]

The paradox of Stalinism is the unimportance of ideology in a country where every activity and every utterance seem to be permeated with it. To use Marxism's own definition, Soviet ideology has become a system of "false consciousness" serving to rationalize the vested interests of an exploitative social order. The charted line does not determine the course; the ship of state veers with the winds of time, while the map is constantly redrawn to preserve the illusion of rectilinear progress.

[9] Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism," Vol. XIII of *Collected Works*, New York, International Publishers, p. 281.

[10] For an elaboration of the foregoing, see the reviewer's article "Soviet Thought in the Nineteen-Thirties: An Interpretive Sketch," Indiana University Slavic Studies, Vol. I (to be published shortly).

Reflections on Prison-Land

Wilhelm Starlinger:
Grenzen der Sowjetmacht (The Limits of Soviet Power)
Holzner-Verlag, Wurzburg (Germany), 1955, 133 pp.

Reviewed by Erik Willenz

A GERMAN repatriate from the Soviet Union where he was imprisoned for nearly six years as a political offender, Dr. Starlinger has written a book of considerable interest not only as a record of his experiences and observations of the Soviet domestic scene but also as a speculative commentary on the USSR and its future relations with the rest of the world, in particular with Germany.

The author, a doctor by profession, headed the medical staff of a hospital for epidemic diseases in the Prussian city of Koenigsberg at the end of World War II. He was twice arrested by the Soviets, first in 1947 and again in 1948, his second arrest resulting in deportation to the USSR. There he remained until the end of 1953 as a prisoner and camp doctor in a Soviet labor camp in the Potma region, roughly halfway between Moscow and Kuibyshev. After his release he found his way to West Germany, where he presently resides.

It is hardly surprising that Mr. Starlinger, in writing about the Soviet Union, is mainly concerned with the future of Germany. And there is reason in his premise that Germany's future will be closely affected by internal developments in the USSR. On the basis of such an approach, the author's experiences fitted him to make a significant contribution; but through a devious and obscure line of reasoning he arrives at conclusions which, in this reviewer's opinion, are tinged with no small degree of wishful thinking.

In analyzing Soviet Russia and her people, for example, he relies heavily on pat statements drawn from late nineteenth century German studies of the Russian national character. Such studies, in addition to being abstract and now largely obsolete, are highly distorted by racist overtones and by a condescending attitude toward other peoples, particularly those of Eastern origin.

Having analyzed the Russians on the basis of a questionable social psychology, the author proceeds

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to employ another somewhat tarnished science to elaborate his version of the future Soviet course in world affairs. The reader is thus plunged into a rather tortuous geopolitical discussion, in which the author develops the theme that the ability of the USSR to maintain control of its vast empire depends upon two factors: first, the continued successful functioning of the totalitarian system within Soviet borders; second, and possibly to a greater extent, Soviet success in withstanding external pressure from the rapidly emerging colossus of China.

In Mr. Starlinger's view, it is the second of these factors which constitutes the most important limit to Soviet power. He asserts that population pressure in China, aggravated by the ever increasing birthrate, must inevitably spur its rulers to imperialistic ventures. Since overpopulation in the southern part of China would prevent expansion in that direction, the only area left open to penetration would be in the north and northwest—that is, the thinly populated areas of the Soviet Far East. The USSR would be compelled, of course, to take measures to check Chinese expansion; not able by itself to resist the Chinese collossus, the Soviet rulers would have to turn to the West for assistance. Thus a new power balance would arise, in which the present division between the Communist and non-Communist blocs would break down and the Soviet Union would realign itself with a West composed of the United States and all of Europe, including Germany.

The author thus appears to dismiss the more common view that the greatest hope of Germany's salvation lies in a general détente brought about by the deterrent effect of weapons parity between the Communist and free worlds and leading to a gradual modification of the Communist aim of world domination. Instead, in his view, Germany's redemption will come as a result of the formation of a common front against China; he seems to imply further that the genuine solidarity of racial brotherhood will serve as the future guarantee of peace after triumphing over the bogus solidarity of international communism.

The theory that the Communist camp eventually may be destroyed by an emergent conflict of interests between the Soviet Union and China is not entirely implausible. However, the author's argument that the new world alignment is *inevitable* can be questioned on logical as well as factual grounds. Granting that China will be faced with the problem of overpopulation, there may be many ways of solving it (*e.g.*, rapid industrialization) other than expansion into the USSR—a step that would be extremely foolhardy, given the very real community of interests existing between the two Communist powers. Furthermore, the author's invocation—however faint—of the myth of "racial brotherhood" in this context is not only weak and unconvincing, but thoroughly misleading and even dangerous.

In spite of these jarring notes in his treatment of the broader problem of Soviet Russia's future world relationships, Mr. Starlinger gives a highly interesting and valuable account of his experiences under the Soviet forced labor system, the changes that have taken place in it, and the repercussions on his environment of such crucial internal developments as the death of Stalin and the liquidation of Beria.

The author distinguishes two types of labor camps in his account—one for criminals only, the other primarily for political prisoners. The separation of political and criminal prisoners in different camps became mandatory under a decree issued in the fall of 1948. (The execution of this decree does not appear to have been uniform, however, since other returned prisoners have reported that criminals and political offenders were still together in some camps after 1948, as for instance at Vorkuta.)

According to the author, political prisoners generally receive far worse treatment than criminals. At the same time, they are allowed much greater freedom of expression as neither they nor the camp authorities care much what they say; few among the more serious offenders expect to be released, and even if they are, their new domiciles are usually in the most desolate areas of the USSR, which for all practical purposes means complete exile from society.

Despite this general rule, the conditions described by the author as prevailing in his camp seem to have been distinctly better than those reported by former inmates of other camps. One advantage was the camp's location in an area where the climate was relatively milder than in the coal and gold mining regions of the far north. Also, a relatively high proportion of the prisoners were skilled laborers assigned to indoor work. Of particular value to the author as a source of information were a number of prisoners who had belonged to the Soviet managerial and intellectual elite. This latter group included some who had worked with or under top-level Soviet leaders, as well as several fairly high-ranking army officers. The camp's prisoner complement during the author's detention was only about 1,500 to 2,000.

Life in the camp was strict but bearable. The camp inmates were sufficiently aware of the consequences of disobedience so that the guards seldom had to use violence and even dispensed with carrying weapons inside the camp. Nevertheless, there were occa-

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sional hunger strikes by individual prisoners. Such cases seemed to upset the camp authorities considerably—probably, the author suspects, because such occurrences had to be reported to higher headquarters and the camp administration did not like to attract unfavorable attention from above.

In 1952 the camp changed over from a ration basis to an actual pay basis, but there was no significant improvement in the well-being of the individual prisoner. Factory workers still received the highest pay as they had received the highest rations before. Moreover, each prisoner now had to pay for his entire upkeep as well as contribute to the salary of the guards. These deductions were automatic, with the prisoners receiving only the net income. Any prisoner whose earnings fell below the prescribed deductions ceased to receive any pay at all.

Each barrack had electric light, and in 1952 loudspeakers were installed. Once or twice a month movies were shown. The prisoners also had access to a camp library where books and newspapers were available. The authorities permitted chess playing (but not card games) and even encouraged the staging of amateur theatricals.

Sanitary conditions in the camp were good and strictly enforced. Medical care was also relatively adequate thanks to the rather large number of doctors among the prisoners, although there was frequent interference by the camp administration with the work of the medical staff. Throughout his experience as camp doctor, the author reports that the mortality rate was never higher than 1 to 1.5 percent, with all fatalities the result of natural death. Once a prisoner was hospitalized, the aim was to keep him alive. In case of death, a certificate was prepared, and copies were sent to higher administrative organs, including Moscow. This practice apparently was instituted only in 1949.

The dreary routine of camp life experienced its first break with Stalin's death. The author describes how the weight of universal fear which hitherto had maintained discipline not only among the prisoners but also among the security organs seemed suddenly lifted. It is not quite clear from his account, however, whether this quasi-liberation resulted in a more human relationship between guards and prisoners.

More important, from the regime's standpoint, was the general administrative and economic disorganization which occurred in the camp as a result of the incorporation of the MGB (Ministry of State Security) into the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) in June 1953. The MGB was deprived of control of the output of the camp's slave labor, the local MVD took over charge of the prisoners and camp security, and various other ministries assumed control of its industrial installations. This led to sharp conflict between the MVD and the other ministries, with both sides denouncing each other in daily communications to Moscow and even engaging in bitter quarrels in front of the prisoners.

The chaos which marked the immediate post-Stalin period, with its momentary relaxation of some controls, set the prisoners in the author's camp to dreaming of a better future. Their dreams were nurtured by the news that certain measures which had lain dormant for years, such as a new code for the ministry of justice, were to be put into effect. This and rumors of other moves toward relaxation of the Stalinist terror gave rise to all sorts of speculation about a "new course", and hope for the dawn of a new era of peace and freedom.

The author claims that the general amnesty decreed by the regime in March 1953 actually applied in the main to criminal rather than political prisoners. The released criminal elements began settling in the cities, with a resultant increase in the urban crime rate. Another consequence, he says, was that Moscow and some other cities during this time suffered a depletion of their reserve stocks of bread and a breakdown in food distribution.

The sudden liquidation of Beria occasioned another sharp shock. As one of Stalin's closest henchmen, he had enjoyed so much power for so long that he was considered irremovable. The immediate reaction of the camp chiefs was to rush into their offices and smash the pictures of Beria which still hung in most of the rooms in the administration building. The feeling of insecurity in the MVD mounted to new heights.[1]

Lack of space forbids more than cursory mention of other topics dealt with in the book. These include an interesting report of the prisoners' speculations concerning the role of Malenkov in the Beria purge, the further disintegration of the MVD, the economic crisis and its implications for the present Soviet leadership, and the world situation in general.

To sum up, Dr. Starlinger's book does not merit acclaim as a sound and penetrating analysis of Soviet Russia and the future development of Soviet-world relations. It is nevertheless worthwhile reading as an eyewitness report of the reactions of a group of Soviet citizens to the events of a particularly vital period of their country's history.

[1] This view has been substantiated by careful studies of available evidence. See, for example, V. Gsovski, "The Soviet Amnesty", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. II, No. 6, 1953.

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